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INFANT LEVEL READING TEXTBOOKS IN BELIZE: THE COLONIAL LEGACY IN CURRICULUM POLICY

by

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A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
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DEDICATION

The writer of this thesis would like to dedicate this work to all the little children of Belize. It was some of those children for whom I had the privilege of being a teacher, who inspired this study, and it is for them that I have completed it.

ABSTRACT

The colonial relationship in the educational system in Belize, Central America, and the context in which curriculum choices are made, motivated this analysis of reading materials. Five of the main reading textbooks used to teach reading to beginners were evaluated in a generalized content analysis, using a method and justification articulated by Decore, Carney, and Urion (1981). A survey was made using questionnaires and interviews of the opinions and views of one hundred Belizean teachers, representing a sample of convenience.

The findings of the content analysis of the readers supported the researcher's initial assumption that these readers fail to reflect Belizean cultures, or to take into account the languages spoken by the children in Belizean schools. The teachers' questionnaire supported this premise as well. Findings revealed that most teachers stated that they had encountered problems with these readers, and most teachers seemed to want a change to another textbook. The analysis of data revealed no statistically significant association (as might be revealed by chi-square computation) between the variables of sex, age, teaching experience, ethnicity of the teacher, and the variable of positive identification of either of those problem areas, culture or language. However there was an association between the variable of such recognition on the part of the teachers, and the variable of level of teacher qualification.

It is suggested that in the future textbooks be written that are culturally relevant, and which linguistically support the first language of the Belizean child.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The colony of British Honduras, now Belize, developed into a British settlement during the seventeenth century, out of the activities of the logwood cutters. These were originally British pirates and bucaneers who originally established themselves as settlers and later imported African slaves; from these sprang the Creole population of the present society. In the middle of the nineteenth century refugees fled to Belize from Mexico and Guatemala, and their offspring now comprise the other main ethnic group in the country. Black Caribs who established themselves in the southern part of the country now make up another important cultural group, while the native Maya and Ketchi Indians complete the five main cultural groups of Belizean society. As a result of the various cultural groups settling in the country over time, Belize has become a multilingual, multicultural soceity.

The major concern of the study is to examine the influence of colonialism on the educational policies set in the schools, and more specifically on the language policy in education, and the content of the materials employed to teach reading to young children in the schools.

Some authors have pointed out that the framework of colonialism seems a useful one with which to examine educational experiences of colonial societies (Altbach and Kelly 1978; Williamson 1979). In this study it seems appropriate to look at some of the major developments in education, particularly in teaching reading to Infants through the lens of colonialism to understand key elements of contemporary educational reality, particularly in the reading materials used in the schools in the country of Belize. The study then proposes to evaluate specific claims about the relevance of the prescribed readers used to teach reading to Infant I in Belizean schools. The following are the premises which the researcher proposes. Included is a brief rationale justifying each proposition.

1. That the reading textbooks used for Infant I reading in Belize reflect the consequences of a colonial heritage.

   The rationale for assuming such a statement stems from the obvious fact that Belize was a British colony up to September, 1981. It was British missionaries who seem responsible for the early origins of educational effort in Belize. The beginnings of formal education in Belize started in the early 1800's; this is stated in the Colonial Office records (1834:123-44). In referring to British colonial schools, Williamson (1979) states that historically the schools system was instituted by the British colonial government and the curriculum issued to these schools was not adapted to the needs of the local community; and further, that these curriculum materials naturally ignored the cultural differences that existed between the inhabitants of the metropolitan, and the inhabitants of the colonies. Furthermore, the English language and English values were incorporated into the textbooks that were used for reading instruction.

In Chapter II a discussion of the historical aspect of the growth of Belize as a British colony will be attempted (Dobson 1973; Grant 1976; Zetzekorn 1981; Bolland 1977).

2. That standard English is not the first language of most Belizeans; the assumption in teaching reading that English is the first language is false and does not reflect the realities of the Belizean multilingual situation.

   This statement can be justified by examining the United Nations Population Census (Zetzekorn 1981) revealing the different ethnic groups of the Belizean society, and the percentages of the different languages spoken in Belize. Other authors who have done research on the above are (Rubenstein 1979; Craig 1974; and Carrington 1979). An examination of their research on this argument will be discussed in Chapter III of the study.

3. That the prescribed readers used for the teaching of beginning reading to children in Belize do not portray the multilingual nature of the society, and that the recommended guidebooks and scope and sequence charts for these readers fail to take into consideration the following:

   a. The language patterns and skills of the child's first language.

b. The sound system of the child's primary language.

c. The gestures and expressions of the child's own language.

d. The grammatical differences of the child's primary language, and English.

e. The teaching of English as a second language.

A brief look at the prescribed readers and their accompanying guidebooks reveals that they have been designed for British and American societies. Another reason for the formulation of the above presupposition rests on the research done by other educators (Buhler and Hadel 1977; Young 1973) on Belize, their contribution to this arguement will be discussed in Chapter IV of this study. The content-analysis of the readers, it is hoped will further justify the formulated assumption.

4. That these Infant I readers used in Belizean schools completely ignore the multi-cultural nature of the Belizean society; the images, family structures and values, and instead portray a western middle-class nuclear family and their way of living.

   a. The portrayal of white middle-class images, as the norm for Belize is false. The family structure presented in the text is not consistant with realities of Belizean life.

   b. The values exhorted and implictly portrayed at times clash with Belizean's values and norms.

5. That these representations distort reality to the child and create false images of a child, and the concept of oneself.

It is expected that the examination of the textbooks will disclose that the culture of the people portrayed in the text is not the Belizean culture. The above conclusions have also been shown by other researchers (Broderich 1973; Milne-Holme 1981; Carrington 1979 and others). Literature has also been written on the impact of books on the young child (Wright 1976; Singh 1975; Child 1946).

The few studies done on Belize have not addressed themselves directly to the specific impact of colonialism on Belizean education. It seems that Belizean educators have not bothered to examine critically the content of prescribed readers, with the view to their relevance to the Belizean child. The curriculum content, teaching aids, and textbooks have been purchased from either England or the United States. A scholarly research as this study proposes seems long overdue. At this moment Belize has just emerged as an idependent nation, and it is time that attention be focused on the biases incorporated in curriculum materials, and the notion of relevance of these curriculum materials be critically examined.

To further reinforce and justify the above assumptions, a teachers' questionnaire was administered to Belizean teachers. The questionnaire was designed to obtain the reactions, opinions, and suggestions of teachers regarding or relating to the prescribed textbooks used for Infant I reading in Belizean schools. The following assumptions would be based on the responses given in the questionnaire:

1. That most teachers would state that they had encountered problems in using the prescribed reading textbooks for Infant I.

    The above assumption was made because of the knowledge that teachers do encounter problems in using these foreign readers.

2. That the problems which teachers would state would include at least two categories; those pertaining to the culture, and those with the problems dealing with the language differences caused by the multilingual nature of children.

    The above premise was formulated on the fact and reality of the multilingual and multicultural nature of Belize. It was presumed that teachers are aware of the problems relating to these two outstanding features.

3. That most teachers would desire a change to another textbook.

    It was assumed that most teachers would welcome a change to a more appropriate book, because they are encountering problems of a cultural and multilingual nature in using the present books, which were originally designed for American, English, and West Indian children exclusively.

4. That a significant correlation would exist in the teachers responses between the particular textbook used, especially those which portray an Anglo background, and the culture of our Belizean children, and problems arising therefrom.
5. On this same vein it was further predicted that the responses of the teachers would mark an association between the multilingual nature of the child, and some of the readers used, especially those which completely disregard the child's primary language skills and competence, as against the English language.

   These two above assumptions are based on the numerous research and literature dealing with the problems arising from using textbooks unsuited to the child's culture, and language background (Banks 1969; Begus et al. 1973; Silberman 1964; Baronberh 1971; Carrington 1979; Kramer and Schell 1982), and others.
6. It was further anticipated that there might exist a correlation between the variables of cultural revelance and the other variables of sex, age, teaching experience, qualification of teachers, and ethnicity of the teachers.
7. It was also presumed that an association might exist between the variable of multilingual nature, and the other variables of sex, age, teaching experience, qualification of teachers, and ethnicity of the teachers.

Chapter II proposes to convey to the reader some general information about the newly emerged nation of Belize. The first part of this chapter deals with the demographic and historical considerations, while the second part concerns itself with the cultural nature of the people of Belize.

Chapter III relates the development of formal education in Belize, beginning from the early nineteenth century to the present. The information documented in these introductory chapters seemed necessary as they shed some light on the real nature and understanding of the purpose of the thesis.

A review of the related literature to this study is presented in Chapters IV, and V. Since the research project was primarily concerned with the language policy in Belizean Infant Schools; the first part of the review addressed itself to language in the colonial context, and looked particularly at the Belizean situation. Chapter V was concerned with the pedagogical implications arising from second language instruction, especially for children whose first language is Creole. The last part of the chapter reviewed literature related to the reading process, and methods employed for teaching reading to beginners.

Chapter VI presented the design of the study, with a justification of the methodology used for the content-analysis of the readers. It also described the samples used, and the methods employed in collecting data for the study.

The main body of the thesis is found in Chapters VII and VIII. Chapter VII documents a detailed analysis of the content of the five main readers used for teaching children to read in Belize; while Chapter VIII presents the analysis of the teachers' questionnaire. The responses given by the teachers in each item was carefully studied and discussed in this chapter.

In the last chapter of the study the researcher attempts to give a retrospective view of the study. The aims of the study were re-examined in the light of the findings and their possible implications for education and research put forward. The study concluded by looking at possible suggestions for teachers in training, and for curriculum officers employed in designing and selecting materials for teaching reading in Infant Schools in Belize.

II. A BRIEF GUIDE TO THE NEWLY EMERGED NATION OF BELIZE

A. Location

From its early years of British settlement Belize's location was doubly crucial to the British Government strategically because of its geographical position in Central America, which gave Britain a hold on the center of Spanish possessions, and its historical and economic connection with the West Indies. The first pirates and bucaneers found a haven in its numerous cayes and islets which surround the eastern coast of Belize. This new nation, a Latin American country in the heart of the Caribbean Basin, found utterance as an independent state on September 21st, 1981. Belize is situated on the eastern coast of Central America, bordering Mexico on the north and Guatemala on the west and south, and facing the Caribbean Sea to the east. About 174 miles long and 70 miles broad at its widest point, Belize is a coastal strip containing about 8,866 square miles of land, including 266 square miles of island. The long coastline of Belize is mostly swampy with thick mangroves, and is punctuated by frequent rivers, the most significant of which are the Belize, New and Sibun rivers. A major feature of the topography of Belize is the barrier reef, a succcession of coral atolls and small islands called cayes, which extends almost the entire length of the country and is the second largest reef in the world.

B. Climate

It is apparent that climatic factors must have played an important part in the economic history of the country. Early logwood settlers depended on the seasonal aspect of the rainfall season to float logs to the sea, and in the dry season for felling the logwood, and later on the mahogany trees, giving settlers opportunity to exploit the country's natural resources. The climate of Belize is tropical, temperatures on the coast ranging from an absolute minimum of 50 degrees Farenheit. Humidity in Belize is uncomfortably high, and averages 88%. Rainfall shows considerable regional variation, from an annual average of 40 to 50 inches to the north and west, to 160 inches in the south. Most of the rain falls in the summer months (June to October), which is also the time when Belize is threatened by hurricanes. Hurricanes have been a frequent and violent feature of the climate of Belize: three major storms, in 1931, 1955, and 1961, and many less destructive, have damaged the coastal regions in this country.

C. A Brief Demographic History

Because of the peculiar way in which Belize came to be settled historically, a diverse multilingual nature of population developed. Though Belize is slighty larger than El Salvador and is about twice the size of Jamaica, its population is considerably smaller than that of its neighbors. The demographic history of Belize over the past three hundred years may be conveniently divided into three distinct periods (Grant 1976). First from the initial British settlement in the seventeenth century to the middle of the ninteenth century, there was a small and fluctuating population that had reached about ten thousand by 1845. In the second period, as a result of the disruption of the Guerra de las Castas in Yucatan, Mexico, thousands of Mayas and Mestizos sought refuge in Belize in the middle of the nineteenth century and many of them stayed. The population of Belize having doubled as a result of this migration, there began a century of sustained growth and the population reached almost 60,000 people by the end of the Second World War. The third period, comprising the last thirty years, has been characterized by an accelerated growth rate that has doubled the population. The present population of Belize is 145,000.

The racial ethnic composition of the population is difficult to ascertain with any accuracy (Bolland 1977). With the arrival of the Yucatan refugees in the middle of the nineteenth century the basic racial/ethnic dichotomy of the county was established. These two largest communities are the mostly Creole-speaking Protestant black population located chiefly in the Belize Distict, and the mostly Spanish-speaking Catholic, Maya and Mestizo population, who live chiefly in the north and west of the country. According to Bolland (1977), the various racial/ethnic groups are to some extent occupationally specialized and geographically segregated, and though they participate in the same economy and are subject to the same policy, it is clear that they do not subscribe to a common culture, ideology, or value system. In the latter part of this chapter an account of the ethnic composition will be undertaken in more detail. The factor that held such a variety of groups together was the monopoly of power held by the colonizers. In other words, the colonial society was bound together by the political and economic institutions of the dominant group.

D. Political Development

Not only has Belize been a colonial dependency, but it has also been profoundly affected in its political and constitutional history. The years from 1936 to the present may be divided into four periods. During the first period from 1936 to 1954, the elected members of the Legislative Council were not only in a minority but were elected by a tiny minority of the population. The spark that set the smoldering discontent was provided in 1949 by the devaluation of the dollar. On the night the devaluation was announced, after weeks of denials that there would be no devaluation, a People's Committee was formed. During 1950 this committee grew into the first coherent anticolonial political party in Belize, the People's United Party. George Price, who was one of the leaders of the People's Committee, became the leader of the party in 1956, First Minister in 1961, Premier of Belize in 1964, and now Prime Minister of

Belize in 1981.

One of the chief demands of the People's United Party was for adult suffrage, and with popular support this goal was achieved in 1954. The 1954 Constitution ushered in the second period of the contemporary constitutional history of Belize. The third period, from 1960 to 1963 saw continuation of the advance toward self government. Full internal self-government was achieved in 1964. The fourth and final period, the attainment of Independence, was accomplished on September 21st, 1981.

The road to Independence generally followed the course taken by other British Colonies in the Caribbean up to the early 1960's, but then it was distorted by a peculiar circumstance, the unfounded claim of Guatemala to the territory of Belize. This claim bred national disunity and seriously warped the political social, and economic development of Belize. The colonial domination undergone by Belize and the other Caribbean countries instilled in the colonized people a sense of inferiority and dependence, promoting disunity among the people, and providing a justification of itself that many of the colonized accepted as true. In such circumstances it is difficult to sustain an organized and conscious anti-colonial struggle. Belizean history shows however, that somehow, despite all the difficulties, an unbroken thread of resistance to domination was maintained.

With independence a serious task faces the Belizean people, not only to transform a society marked by centuries of colonial exploitation and dependency, but to build a national unity shattered by decades of political strain under the weight of the Guatemalan claim. Belizeans recognize that the future and fortunes of Belize are bound up with that of world peace and cooperation in a new international economic order. The Prime Minister of Belize in his independence speech (1981) stated that a struggle for a better, fuller life, for a dignified existance, does not end with independence, but rather that independence is the beginning of a long and difficult struggle in union with people of other developing nations.

E. The Economy

Historical Considerations

As has already been stated, the initial purpose of the settlement in Belize grew out of the interest in the resin dye of the logwood tree, which at the time was acquiring high prices in Europe. Early in the 18th century an anonymous writer noted that for the previous twenty-five years the logwood cutters had supplied a sufficient quantity of logwood, in exchange for British produce, for all the European markets.

Despite the decline of logwood in 1772, Britain was eager to keep its stronghold on the settlement. By 1783 mahogany had acquired high prices on the European market.

The shift from logwood to mahogany in the settlement's economy encouraged the tendency for the control of the economy to concentrate in the hands of a few settlers. These first European settlers were English pirates who used the coast for shelter and later cut and exported logwood which fetched good prices as a dye-fasterner at the time in Europe. The structure of the economic order was later affected by the shift from this economic activity of logwood to mahogany. In 1787 the settlers began to pass a series of laws relating to land, which soon resulted in a dozen settlers owning four-fifths of all the land within the limits of the settlement, thus resulting in almost complete monopoly of the settlement's political economy by a few families who constituted the elite (Bolland and Shoeman 1977:102). These authors have shown how from early developments in the 18th century, the prevailing economic level and political institutions have served to create a situation of closed resources, whereby land was held by a very few landowners to the exclusion of the vast majority of the people. They have also demonstrated how this monopolization prevented the development of an independent peasantry and of agriculture in a country rich in agricultural resources and with abundant land. They have stated that this situation has remained basically unchanged to the present day (ibid.:103).

For three centuries the economy of Belize was dominated by the export of timber: first logwood and then after 1770's mahogany (Bolland 1977). The mahogany trade reached its peak in the boom of the railway-coach building in the 1840's, but entered a more or less permanent depression in the middle of the nineteenth century. In the middle of this century the momentous events of the influx of Mestizo refugees from Yucatan, Mexico, was destined to have a decisive effect on the transfer of economic dependence of forestry to one of agriculture. Most of these refugees formed settled communities in northern Belize. With the mahogany trade in decline and vast areas of the north virtually denuded of mahogany, the big landholders were willing to rent land to the immigrant farmers, who were soon producing considerable quantities of rice, corn and vegetables. By 1857 they were already supplying enough sugar for the local market and a surplus for export. This latter fact brought a quick response from the big landowners, who decided to take over the business of sugar production, forcing some of their tenants into wage labour and quickly dominating sugar exports. Within a decade of the first export of sugar from Belize by the Mestizo rancheros the production and export of sugar was controlled by five companies that had steam machinery on their extensive estates. Many of the Maya and Mestizos became rural proletariat, dependent entirely upon the wages in cash and food provided by plantation work. Others were able to become a part-time peasantry, their low cash wages being underwritten by subsistence agriculture on rented land.

By 1862 when the settlement was officially declared a colony, the dominance of metropolitan countries was firmly establishd and the resources of Belize came under the direct control of the metropolotan capitalists. The distribution of land in Belize was such that the vast majority of the population was completely dispossessed; at the same time the people were unable to grow their own food. They remained dependent upon imports, creating a strong merchant class that, together with the forestry interests, dominated Belizean society well into the middle of the 20th century (Bolland and Showman 1977).

The country of Belize entered the 20th century as a stagnant and dependent society, the vast majority of its people disenfranchised and dispossessed, in conditions of poverty and hopelessness. By the 1930's conditions had not improved. The severe damage and economic disruption caused by the hurricanne of 1931 compounded the effects of the worldwide depression of the 1930's. There was widespread unemployment, particularly among the timber workers who represented the great majority of wage labourers in the country. The conditions of the working class during 1940's were even more crippling than those of the depression years. The declining mahagony and chicle industries and the paucity of agricultural development created widespread unemployment and the payment of starvation wages. Bad as things were throughout the decade, they suddenly got much worse in 1949, when a serious drought ruined crops. A British reporter of the period noted that "of the 35,000 employables, nearly a quarter are without work or working on part-time work, earning less than 12 shillings per week".

In the last two decades, since Belizeans have had a significant say in the running of their country, some major changes have occured. The two most significant are the change from a forestry to an agricultural economy and an important land reform program that made available to small farmers hundreds of thousand of acres previously owned by the large estates. Today two forms of agriculture, peasant and plantation production, have competed for control over the country's land. At present there are four principle export commodities, sugar, citrus, fish and timber. The fishing industry exported 1.5 thousand metric tons of fish in 1970, and in 1977 it exported 1.9 thousand metric tons. While in the sugar industry there were 70 thousand metric tons exported in 1970, and 98 thousand metric tons exported in 1977. [1]

The Domestic Economy 1981-1982

In the years 1981-1982, the rate of economic growth slowed partly because of world conditions which resulted in lower prices of export commodities and insufficient investment capital, and partly because of local conditions such as pests, weather conditions and problems of cash flow.

Sugar production declined from 103,275 tons in 1980 valued at $93 million dollars to 97,725 tons in 1981 valued at 89.6 million dollars. The estimated production in 1982 is 101,000 tons.

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[1] Figures from *The New Belize*.

Citrus increasd from 1.4 million boxes in 1980 valued at $16.4 million dollars to 1.6 million boxes in 1981. valued at 14.9 million dollars. A bigger production is expected in 1982, thanks to rehabilitation measures.

Production of rice was 19.2 million pounds in 1981 compared with 14.9 million pounds in 1980. The Marketing Board received more deliveries than expected, and this created a problem of cash flow and insufficient storage.

Corn production in 1981 was 44.7 million pounds as compared with 42.5 million pounds in 1980. The Marketing Board received more corn than in previous years and this operation caused problems of cash flow as well as insufficient storage. All deliveries for corn have not yet been paid. The Board has some 4 million pounds of corn which is to be sold to the U.S.A.

The production of red kidney beans was 2.8 million pounds in 1981. In 1980 it was 3 million pounds.

F. The People And Their Culture

The Creole-Speaking Belizean

The Creole-speaking Belizean of mixed European and African ancestry predominates in the country today. According to Cosminsky (1977) the term "Creole", refers to the Creole-speaking descendents of Africans, with or without European mixture. These Afro-Belizeans or Creoles vary in appearance from ebony black to near caucasoid, and make up one-half of the population today. Brockman (1977), has pointed out that the Creole population has a socially significant range of colour variation from "clear", to dark and ebony black. This cultural group is concentrated mainly in Belize City.

The origins of this ethnic group date back to the year 1638, when a crew of English pirates took refuge in what is now Belize City. They were later joined by settlers from the Caribbean, privateers, and African slaves. From the time the first slaves arrived in Belize they represented a wide cross-section of African heritage. Grant (1976) has stated that the broad base of the Creole element is black in colour; that the family structure tends to be characterized by common law unions; and constitutes a high degree of female headed households; that these factors mostly predominate in the lower-class families; and that this social stratum seems to have retained a number of discernible "Africanisms".

This British settlement became a British colony in 1862, and by this time the population in this area had become remarkedly mixed. As the Belizean society began to take form, the settlers were forced to become creolized or adjusted to the new environment.

Today's Creole-language evolved out of this situation; Belizean Creole is similar to the Jamaican Creole. Setzekorn (1981:30) on Belize Creole states:

> "...the language as spoken in Belize today is a rich patios of English, Creole local words, and foreign expressions, delicately blended and delivered with light sing-song Calyspso-like intonations, difficult to understand, but delightful to hear".

Some of the quaint solecisms expressed in idiomatic Creole are:

> "Fence has got ears and tokada (blind) got eyes", "Punkin neba bea watamelon", "When fish come from riba battam and say haligatah got bellyache, you beta belivam", "Same place pelican wana go sea breeze bloam".

Allsopp (1965) believes that over the past years the Creole language is covering the country with varying degrees of intensity, spreading outwards from Belize City, along the main highways, and concentrating in the main towns of Corozal, Orange Walk, Punta Gorda, and Stann Creek, and cutting across area of Spanish-speaking, Garifuna-speaking , and Maya-speaking people with the result that bilingualism is widespread in the country. Yet on the other hand in some areas some people are trilingual, adding Spanish to their primary language.

Of particular notice in Belize which makes it like the rest of the Caribbean, is the ability of most educated people to use "raw Creole" or "broad Creole", most freely with family and friends. Allsopp (1965) notes that the immediate kinship of Belizean Creole to the rest of the

Caribbean is demonstrated in the survival of similar Africanisms, identity of proverbs, and the content and linguistic character of the Anancy stories, in spite of the isolation of Belize from the rest of the British Caribbean territories.

The first high school in Belize was founded in Belize City in 1882, and it was attended mainly by the Creole population. The Creoles then gradually obtained most of the government positions opened to local people. The British held the highest positions, lighter Creoles held highest positions opened to local people, and dark Creoles occcupied lower posts. Brockmann (1977) has pointed out that Creoles regard Belize as their country and the other ethnic groups as intruders. With their Creole language which is similar to English, their urban residence bias, and their British orientation, they tend to feel superior to the other ethnic groups.

Censuses up to the 1960's seem to take no notice of the Creole language merely giving the linguistic numbers of "English speakers", in the linguistic distribution; it seems this term was understood to apply to Creole speakers. In the figures the Creole language is not mentioned, yet none of the other languages were then spoken and even now, as the Creole language is.

The Spanish-speaking Belizean

The term Spanish in Belize refers to people of Mestizo (mixed Indian-Hispanic origin) or Spanish origin usually from Mexico or Guatemala (Cosminsky 1977). The Spanish-speaking population of Belize which constitutes about 25% of the population are mainly found in the Corozal, Orange Walk, and Cayo Districts. This largest single influx of people came to settle as a result of the bloody War of the Races (Guerra de las Rasas), which broke out in Yucatan, Mexico, in 1848. In this war the Indians rose up against their Mexican landlords. Thousands of mixed-blooded Mestizos fled into the protection of the Bay settlement of British Honduras (Belize). By 1859, it was recorded that between twelve to fifteen thousand Spanish-speaking Mestizos were then living in the northern part of the country. The War of the Races lasted until 1874, and of the thousands of Mestizos who sought the shelter of British protection, over 8,000 remained permanently (Dobson 1976). Their influence can be seen in the fact that Spanish is now the mother tongue of approximately 40 percent of Belizeans today (Setzekorn 1981:20). The Spanish-speaking population of the west of the country resulted from unrest and harsh economic conditions in Peten, Guatemala. This led to a considerable influx of Spanish and Mestizo people into the Cayo District. According to LePage (1972), these Guatemalans settled in what is now the small Belizean frontier town of Benque Viejo del Carmen, situated some eighty miles west of Belize City.

Allsopp (1965), believes that the significance of the Spanish language is geographical and extra-national, since the Spanish language is an overgrowth from neighbouring lands of Mexico and Guatemala. While the Creole language has an intraterritorial use and an interterritorial Caribbean relationnship, with no official status, the Spanish language has wide international use and massive status. Belize is in the lap of Central America, and in these border towns the people have freedom of movement across the borders. The Spanish language is entrenched in the north and west of the country. The radio and television in these areas make use of the Spanish speaking stations of Mexico and Guatemala. The historical connection with Mexican and Guatemalan culture combined with the geographical proximity is especially significant in this respect. The General Certificate of Education, 'O' level Examinations from the London Associated Board reflects this feature. The low passes in the English G.C.E. "O" levels, of these children taking these exams, as against the 100 per cent of passes in the Spanish language, G.C.E. "O" level of these same children is a remarkable phenomenon, since English is taught in schools, while Spanish is not.

The Maya-speaking Belizean

For some fifteen centuries the Maya thrived in an area that stretched from southern Mexico to Honduras, and Belize was an important part of their domain, being at the center of a trading system which extended all along the Caribbean coast. We know them as a people whose advanced civilization reached its peak between the 7th and 8th centuries A.D. They were expert farmers, providing themselves with a wide variety of crops including corn, cassava, beans, yams, and squash. While Europe struggled through the Dark Ages, the Maya developed a knowledge of astronomy which allowed them to devise a calender as precise as today's they employed an advanced system of mathematics based on the zero concept, long before this was known in Europe. They built magnificent pyramids and palaces, examples of which can be seen in Belize today at sites like Altun Ha, Xunantunich, Lubaantun, and Lamamai.

When the Spanish tried to conquer the Maya in the 16th century, they encountered fierce resistance. In 1531, a Spanish expedition set out from Yucatan to Chetumal. In answer to a demand to submit to Spain, its chief ruler, Nachankan, replied that he did not desire peace. When the Spanish marched into Chetumal they found the place deserted and renamed it Villa Real. This was the first attempted Spanish settlement on Belizean territory. But the decision of the Maya to withdraw to the bush was only a war tactic. Nachankan and his Maya warriors harrassed the Spanish troups whenever they came out to look for food. This so weakened the Spanish forces that they became prisoners in the city surrounded by Maya forces. After eighteen months the surviving Spanish fled, heading out to sea. Thirteen years later another Spanish force conquered the area north of Belize.

The British settlers rarely encountered the Maya during their first century of occupation since the settlers remained near the coast where the logwood was abundant. But in the late eighteenth and early ninteenth centuries the British settlers, in response to the changing demands of the metropolitan market, moved further into the interior in search of mahogany. Then, encroaching upon Maya settlements and encountering resistance, British troops drove the Maya deeper into the western forest. When they reemerged later in the nineteenth century they were decisively beaten by the British, who then incorporated them into the social structure of the colony as a dominated and dispossessed people.

The present day Maya of Belize, the only indigenous peoples of the country, as we have seen once heavily populated the entire area which is now Belize. They seem to have mysteriously emigrated to Mexico in the tenth century A.D. (Narda 1973). Today their numbers make up only about thirteen per cent of the country's population. Most of the present day Belizean-Maya reentered the country during the period of British occupation. They settled in the interior of the country, mostly in the Toledo District. Narda (1973) states that the scattered remants of Maya people may have still been living in the forest of Belize when Spain seized Yucatan, Mexico, in the sixteenth century. The present day Mayas of Belize speak three varieties of the Maya language; Maya-Mopan, Kethci, and Yucateco.

Mayan migration in the Toledo District in Belize, began in the 1880's, with the founding of San Antonio by a group of Mopan speakers (Sapper 1897; Thompson 1930). Until the second war, the Maya maintained very limited ties with the outside world. Most of them lived in small isolated groups as subsistence agriculturalists. These settlements varied in size from single house occupied by a nuclear family to villages of several dozen households occupied by a number of distinct kin groups (Howard 1980). The composition of these settlements varied over time as families moved in search of new agricultural lands. During the last few decades of the ninteenth century, larger settlements were assigned reserves by the colonial government. Over the past thirty years the Ketchi and Mopan Indians have evolved from being largely subsistence oriented agriculturalists, toward a greater emphasis on cash-crop production.

In the south of the country there is limited acculturation and merging of Mayas with other ethnic groups, while in the north of the country many Mayas have undergone a process of Hispanicization (Koenig 1977). The Maya language is thinly distributed in the north of the country, with the Spanish language over-riding it. San Victor, Zaibe, and Pachacan are about the only villages in the Corozal District, where Maya is spoken by and to the children (Allsopp 1965). Koenig (1977) comments that it is interesting to note that although English is the official language of the country and would seem to provide the villages with access to increased economic opportunity, the Mayas have shown little interest in acquiring English or having their children learn it. They prefer their children to learn Spanish. Allsopp (1965) has documented that in 1926 Maya as the principal language in the northern districts was spoken by 21.8 percent of that population, in 1946 this had declined to 10 percent, while in 1970 only 5.6 percent of that population in the northern districts stated that Maya was their principle language.

The Garifuna People of Belize

Since the year 1797 there have been living on the southern coastal regions of Belize, a group of people known as the "Black Caribs", they make up 7 percent of the Belizean population. They are the descendants of West Africans and Red Caribs (Setzekorn 1981). The ethnic origin of the Black Caribs can be traced through their eventful history to the year 1675 when a sailing ship carrying West African slaves ran aground in a storm off the tiny island of Becquia, near St. Vincent, in the Windward Island chain on the eastern rim of the Caribbean. The surviving ship-wrecked Africans found this island inhabited by Island Caribs. Intermarriage between the Africans and the Red Caribs gave birth to the present day Black Caribs. In 1832 large numbers of Caribs from Spanish Honduras made their way to Belize and settled along the coast in Punta Gorda, Belize. Later they spread to Stann Creek Town, now called Dangriga; to Hopkins, Seine Bight; and Barranco.

This ethnic group, the Garifuna or Black Caribs, have their own culture, which resembles no new world African culture. They cling to their own folkways. Their fascinating language is a blend of African, French, and Spanish (Allsopp 1965). Allsopp believes that the Carib language could be a result of a fusion of Amerindian and African structures, with French, English, and Spanish lexical mixtures. Their language seems a crucial aspect of their identity and history. The arrival of the Garifuna to Belize is celebrated and reenacted annually by the Garifuna on Carib Settlement Day, on November 19th, a public holiday in Belize. This history and celebration play a role in reinforcing Carib identity and unity. Many of the Garifuna people also speak English and Spanish, at times adding Maya to their languages. This multilingualism and the ability for language is one of the characteristics that is praised in the Garifuna, by the other ethnic groups. It seems to be regarded as something inherent in the Garifuna, as a native ability or racial trait.

Although most Garifuna are Catholics they also still maintain elements of their traditional beliefs, e.g. belief in dreams, spirits, the honouring of ancestors, and their ceremonies such as the "shaman", "dogo", "buiai", and so forth.

G. Conclusion

A correlation seems to exist between the stereotype of ethnicity with religious affiliation, and actual church ties in Belize (Cosminsky 1977). The Garifuna, the Maya, and the

Mestizo are Catholics, and the Creoles are primarily Methodists and Anglicans. The Churches then tend to increase social distance that exists between the ethnic groups. Some authors have pointed out that a close relationship seems to exist between education and religion (Grant 1976; Cosminsky 1977; Brockman 1977). The Catholic schools seem to cater for the Spanish-speaking , Maya, and Garifuna communities, while the Anglican and Methodists schools cater for the Creole segment of the population. Church and school then seem to play an important role in socialization and support the ethnic noninteraction from an early age. But it fair to say that since the 1950's there has been considerable cultural amalgamation. The ethnic groups unite against outsiders and interact freely in secondary groups.

Possibly the main reasons for the preservation of the distinct languages among Belizeans, could be, the lack of communication among the different ethnic groups due to little transportation, especially before the 1950's; the low population density; and the desire among each ethnic group to preserve its own particular culture, especially among the Indian, and Garifuna groups. For example Whipple (1976) states:

> "The Black Caribs of Belize are noted for their desire and ability to preserve their cultural traditions".

III. EDUCATION IN BELIZE

A. Education in the 19th Century

Colonial education in Belize has resulted from a combination of a number of factors; economics and politics. The overriding policy of the colonizers was to secure political allegence to Britain through the most economical means. It has been recorded that as early as 1805, the Commander in Chief of Jamaica wrote to the Superintendent then in charge of British Honduras, emphasizing the advantages of seeking the friendship of the Mosquito Indians, since this tribe of Indians had been staunch allies of the British, and bitter enemies of the Spanish. The first action of the Superintendent of British Honduras towards this venture was the education of the young King John, of the Mosquito Indians. The main concern of the colonial government in this undertaking was an assurance of the continued political and econimic control of the British settlements in and around this area. Hence the cultivation of the support of the Mosquito tribe was crucial to Britain at the time. Attempts were also being made to convert the Mosquito Indians to Anglicanism. During this early period the woodcutters did not positively prevent the education of their slaves, but however did little to encourage it. The Education Act of 1807, founded the first school for ten poor children. Colonel Arthur showed great interest in this school, and by 1833 there were said to be between 90 to 120 children attending these schools. At the same time the missionaries were starting their own educational establishments. Colonel Arthur was a religious man who attempted to promote both religion and education, in spite of the fact that it has been reported that the religious instruction of the slaves as well as of adults of the lower class had been seriously opposed at that time. In the years 1812 to 1829 about 709 slaves were baptised by Anglican and Wesleyan missionaries, who in the early ninteenth century were active in the area of education. Bolland (1977) states that during this period the wealthier merchants and mahogany cutters sent their children to Britain or Jamaica for their education, and showed little interest in developing institutions of formal education in the settlement.

In 1819 at a public meeting $300. were voted in Jamaica currency, to be given annually from public funds, in the aid of the Free Schools in the settlement. These schools were run by the Anglican churches. The Catholic chruch's first representative in Belize was a Franciscan priest in 1823, but the Roman Catholic activities really began with the arrival of two English Jesuit priests in 1851, to undertake the pastoral care of the Yucatecan refugees in the northern Districts. By 1856 the Roman Catholic members outnumbered those of the Protestant churches.

It has been noted that in 1833, Superintendant Cockburn who was then in charge of the settlement, stated that education for the slaves would be to encourage an increasing system of morality among the inhabitants. Bolland (1977:111) states that in 1835, Lord Glenely pointed out to Cockburn:

> "the important interest which the Proprietors of land in Honduras have in the religious instruction of the labouring popuation, is the diffusion among them of those principles which afford the security for good order, and the right discharge of every social duty".

In 1835 Thomas Jefferies, a Weslyan missionary reported the existence of two schools, a day school in Stann Creek, attended by 70 children and a Sunday school in Belize Town. In the same year, Henderson, A Baptist missionary reported the existence of three Sunday schools and two day schools, with an attendance of 100 children. The same year the Anglican chaplain reported the number of children at the Free Schools, they were 218 children. He expressed the need for more teachers and supplies, the latter in the form of bibles, and the former to lead the chanting.

From the beginning the responbibility for education had been assumed by the churches. The Free Schools which the government had established early in the ninteenth century were abolished in 1868. In 1836, a meeting was held to decide on the need for some educational facilities for the apprentices, who were shortly to become free citizens, and 100 were voted to be placed at the disposal of the Superindendent and Chaplain for "procuring teachers and books for the schools opened for the Apprenticed Labourer, attending day or evening for the purpose of recieving moral and religious instruction". Education was therefore not intended, nor did it provide a means of independent advancemant among the freedman. The entire period of apprenticeship had actually been designed as a means of securing the labour force for a further period of years, during which time the apprentices, in the words of Superindendent Cockburn, would be

> ".... made to understand the obligation attached to their freedom."

The moral and religious institutions, was simply percieved as a necessary element in this training for citizenship.

Members of the British settlement were more preocupied with exploiting the economic potential of the forests, and neglected other sectors of the economy and the social services in gerneral. This situation remained basically the same after the settlement became a British Colony.

B. Education in the 20th Century

By 1921 the Roman Catholic schools were serving 60% of the population. Grant (1976) informs that in 1926 a comprehensive education ordinance was passed into law and it still remains the legal foundation of the educational system. In this system the central government retains general control of education through a recreated Board of Education, but effective control of education and management of the schools lies with the ministers of religion, in local parishes or districts. Each denomination has a general manager of schools who is usually its representative on the Board of Education.

Grant further states that the expatriate monopoly of power and authority within the churches was virtually total, and that it was very easy for the expatriate clergymen to extend their influence into the field of education, since all of the schools in the 1930's and 1940's, primary and secondary were denominational, and public funds were grudgingly spent. The churches were by no means reluctant to assume the financial responsibility since they held the view that education was closely allied to evangelism.

The Easter Report of 1934

In 1934 a thorough investigation of the educational system of Belize was made by B.H. Easter, Director of Education in Jamaica, at the request of the colonial government. When Easter investigated the educational system, the churches' control of education, both primary and secondary, was firmly established. Easter's visit to the colony coincided with the gorwing concern over the deplorable state of the social services throughout the British West Indies. He was invited to the colony specifically to examine the educational system and to make recommendations for changes. Among other things, he advised the appointment of agents of the "Jeanes" teacher type, with the idea of improving the school system in the rural areas. In Belize, British Honduras, the Jeanes teachers were trained mainly as supervisors to teachers, particularly those in the rural areas, to improve methods and standards. Later, the scope of the supervisors extended to include administrative duties. The term "Jeanes" was dropped in 1942. The immediate outcome of the recommendation was an invitation to J.C. Dixon, Georgia State Supervisor of negro education, who was familiar with the operation of the Jeanes system, to investigate and advise on the best methods for inaugurating Easter's plan.

Dixon Report of 1936

Dixon's report is a close examination of the educational system in then British Honduras, and his conclusions are crucial for understanding the organization of education from the 1930's to the present. Dixon argued that for the Jeanes supervisory system to function as intended the use of local people was important. However, he noted the existence of a rather strong opposition to this idea. Most of this opposition to local control and supervision arose from the missionary nature of the rural schools. At that time all teachers, and supervisors in the Catholic schools were United States nationals. In the Protestant schools, they were mostly West Indian and British personnel. It would be unlikely that these missions would be eager to submit to local supervision. In refering to the multi-denominational organization of education Dixon says:

> "...no reference to the place of the church in the scheme of education in British Honduras would be made if it were possible to make this report without doing so. There seems to be, however, no way do do this for the church is too much a part to the program to ignore it. One might reasonable say, in fact, that education is an appendage of the church."

During this period the eagerness with which each denomination strove to extablish schools in the rural districts often resulted, in a small village where there were hardly enough children in finding two or more schools of different churches competing for enrollment and attendance. The time had come Dixon suggested, for a reassessment to be made, and ask what the school was for, for what purpose did it exist, and to whom did the schools belong. The present arrangement seems to remain basically unchanged from that described by Dixon in the 1930's.

Unesco Report of 1964

In 1964 a Unesco team was commissioned to comprehensively examine the dual system of education in Belize. This commission followed Easter and Dixon in criticizing severely the denominational basis of the system, pariticularly at the secondary level. Throughout the report the commission criticized government's failure to control secondary education. In this system, the religious groups plan and implement their different programs with little attention to the government's economic and social goals. In the absence of inter-denominational cooperation and government supervision and direction, the members of the commission doubted whether a rational and co-ordinated system of secondary education could be realized. The Unesco team also pointed out many isolated and badly planned projects under this system. For example they mentioned the absence of teachers of science in some schools, while other schools had highly qualified graduates of science who were not teaching science.

Grant (1976) observes that from 1950 onwards there was a political move to independence. This move, he believed, in colonies in which a dual system of education prevail, had usually been accompanied by a modification of their educational system, by increasing power of the government. Belize is one country where this had not taken place. On the contrary the Peoples United Party Government, even to the present time continues to reaffirm its belief that the Church as an institution should retain its key position in the country. Belize Times (1967), a government publication continues to affirm that Church and politics share a joint responsibility in creating proper climate for the spiritual, intellectual, and material growth of the Belizen person.

In 1964 to 1965 the school population was, for the Primary schools 26,523, and for the Secondary school population, 2,237. The scholarships given for that year to attend Secondary were 262. Between 1964-1965 only 15% of children of that age range were able to attend Secondary school. In 1969 government inaugurated two Junior Secondary schools, for ages 12 to 15 years. In 1970 the Belmopan Comprehensive school was opened.

C. Present System: 1977

Bolland (1977) has stated that the religious emphasis in the curriculum and the control of education by religious authorities have been constant features of education in the country to the present day. He affirms that the goal of Belizean education has not been to promote either critical intellects or practical skills, but to instill in Belizeans an awareness of the correct modes of conduct and the sense of duty deemed appropriate to obedient colonized people.

All matters relating to education are the ultimate responsibility of the Minister of Education who has considerable powers under the Education Ordinance of 1962, and the Amendment Ordinances of 1967, and 1970.

Responsibility for the administration of the system lies with the Permanent Secretary. The Chief Education Officer functions as the chief professional officer and as adviser to the Permanent Secretary and the Minister of Education.

There is a Dual System of School Management and considerable powers are given by law to Managing authorities who are representatives of the Churches in Belize.

The Language Policy

English is the official language of the country, but there are areas where the mother tongue of the people is Spanish, Creole, Garifuna, Maya and Ketchi languages. English is the medium of instruction in the schools. The teaching of English poses a challenge since it has to be learnt as a second language by most children.

Figures compiled by the Ministry of Education show that five years ago, in 1977 there were 183 Government and Government Aided Primary schools in Belize with an enrollment of about 32 thousand. The latest figures now available show that in 1980 there were 200 Aided Primary schools in Belize, and the enrollement had increased to 6,648.

The Dilemma of the Dual System of Education in Belize

Narda Dobson (1973) observes that the denominational control of education in Belize has led to serious problems. Traditionally the secondary schools have been and continue to be staffed largely by aleins. The Catholic schools have been staffed mainly by American priests and nuns, while the Protestant schools have been staffed by clergy from Britain or the West Indies. In the Catholic schools American textbooks and teaching methods have been used, even if the pupils have to be prepared for the English Examinations. The Protestant schools on the other hand, have had a bias towards the British system of education. They have followed the example set by the Protestant churches in establishing certain British standards based on middle-class value and attitudes to society. The Catholic schools have been more ready to embrace Latin American attitudes and to welcome the Spanish-speaking Mestizos and Indians into their midst. The result has been that the educational system, which ought to be a force for unity in society, has actually accentuated the social and cultural differences between the different communities. Grant and Ashcraft (1976) are of the opinion that denominational differences tend to correspond to both racial and cultural differences and the urban-rural division. The British oriented Creoles, especially in Belize City, provide the membership of the Protestant Churches, while the Catholic Church, although it claims an increasing number of Creole converts, is for political purposes clearly identified with the Latin segment of the community.

The country, therefore has not only had the so-called 'dual system' of control of education; church and state; but also two differing and invariably conflicting systems of education, one British, and the other American.

Regardless of advice, suggestions, and proposals (Dixon Report, Easter Report, Unesco Report) over the years, the entire arrangement appears to be caught in a vicious circle. There seems to be little possibility of interdenominational cooperation between the Roman Catholic and the Protestant. Each school continues to pursue its independent policy, making little attempt to harmonize and standardize the content of courses, much less to relate these to national, social, and economic goals. To further complicate the issue, the Roman Catholic schools continue their strong American bias, while the Protestant schools continue their British bias.

Some of the Jesuits priests have expressed concern over the growing financial problems of other denominational schools, the implication being that the government would be compelled to assume more responsibility for these schools with the likely result of government becoming the main competitor of the Roman Catholic schools. In the matter of facing govermnment competition the consequencies to the Church of the events which took place in Cuba, and Mexico have not been forgotten. The main weakness of the dual-control system of education in Belize, is the splitting of educational effort in a country with very limited resources. Yet both the churches and the government seem agreed that their present relationship should not be modified.

IV. COLONIALISM AND LANGUAGE IN BELIZE

A. Introduction

This research project is primarily concerned with the language policy adhered to in the traditional colonial systems, inherent in the colonial nature of these societies. This language policy has been one of the factors which has had a direct influence on the selection of curriculum materials especially those employed for teaching reading to the young child, in these societies.

The review of related research is organized into two main sections. Section one deals with language in the colonial context in the first part, this is followed by a look at studies done on the pedagogical concerns arising out of this language policy in the country of Belize, by way of example. The concluding part of this section looks at the Creole languaage in the light of colonialism.

Language in the Colonial Context

Most third world countries were at one time or another colonies of western European nations, and an outstanding feature as a result of colonization is that their economic structures, as well as their educational and social systems have typically been modelled upon those of their former colonial rulers (Altbach and Kelly 1978; Bacchus 1980; Williamson 1979). This international transmission of institutions, notably the system of education has brought along to these colonial societies foreign values, patterns of consumption, and foreign attitudes toward life and work. Many writers, in writing about this phenomenon, are of the opinion that the problems of development in most third world countries, stem from the fact that their systems have their root in the history of this colonial heritage. In his book *Colonialism and Underdevelopment*, Ashcraft (1973:21) affirms that the Caribbean's history of colonial domination and dependence has been a factor that has deeply affected the economic, social, political, cultural, and pychological existence of the colonial societies. With reference to education in Belize, a British colony at the time, he states that education in Belize is linked too closely with the same philosophy that emanates from developmental economics, and he doubts that education can have much more than a band-aid-effect.

Altbach and Kelly (1978) are of the opinion that colonial educational systems have certain characteristics that distinguish them from non-colonial educational systems. Schools which emerged in the colonies, they contend, reflect the power and the educational needs of the colonizers. They are of the opinion that while the educational systems, that were established in the colonies served some of the needs of the indigenous people, the schools were primarily designed to serve the needs of those in power; the colonizers. Among some of the characteristics which set colonial schools apart from the schools in noncolonial situations, are the structure of the educational system, the organization of schools, and the content and curriculum of colonial schools. Such schools become alien institutions to the people of the colonies, in that whatever is taught has little to do with the people's culture. According to these authors these may have been done either purposely or unwittingly. The very few who were schooled worked in a new social place, rather than within the context of indigenous culture.

On examination of the process of language development in these colonial societies, it can be noted that most colonial schools, regardless of whether they were urban or rural, government or missionary, placed emphasis on two things, language instruction and moral education. The degree to which the language of the colonized was taught in the schools varied. The language taught in schools was seldom the language spoken by the students who attended them. In the British colonies schools were English-language medium schools. In the French colonies schools sometimes instructed in indigenous languages in the first three years. Regardless of whether these schools used indigenous languages, or not, education as a whole tended to devaluate these languages. If the indigenous languages were taught at all, the school system instructed them only at the most rudimentary levels of education, and considered them transitional to learning European languages (Williamson 1979). This author also states that on those occasions when the native language was taught, it was taught in schools were the assumption was that the children would go to school for two or three years, while European languages became the medium of instruction for all those natives who it was presumed would be destined for urban living, or leadership posts, either in the indigenous society or in the colonial structure. The students who went to urban schools, or stayed beyond three years were taught in the language of the colonizer, and were instructed in this language.

Consequently, it is seen then that in the course of the historical process of colonization, metropolitan models of politics, administration, and education were imposed on the colonized. Williamson (1979) believes that the effect of this process was to reinforce an economic dependency by a cultural dependency on western models of education and learning wherein the colonized came to believe that western life-styles, and western modes and models of education were the worthwhile modes of learning the tendency was to put down all that was indigenous, including the language of the colonized. Williamson (1979) also argues that colonial education causes a great gulf to exist between the educated elites, and the masses of the people, and notes that another characteristic of colonial education, is the loss of cultural identity, which stems from having to cope with an imposed culture of education, especially in having to cope, and foster a foreign language.

Writing about the implications of having to embrace a foreign language Fanon (1973) has noted that every colonized people, every people in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality finds himself face to face with the language of the colonizer, with the culture of the mother country.

With reference to Tanzania, Williamson, has said that the selective exposure of Africans to western culture and the devaluation of African culture, is seen in the fact that the medium of teaching in secondary schools until recently, was the language of English. This phenomenon, Williamson contends was creating a linguistic gulf between the educated and the masses, and helping to sustain an alien atmosphere, in postprimary education. The absence of schoolbooks written in Swahili reinforces this dependency on the English language, in just the same way as the failure of colonial educational systems to create, and train sufficient schoolteachers and academics.

Some of the insight into the cultural, and political significance of this was given in a comment made by Sheikh Abedi in 1962, when his country acquired independence, he observed that the day was truly the beginning of a new era in the history of the development, and the running of the country in the fields of language, national development, and the running of the affairs of his government, he concludes by saying:

> "....Today we have been given the freedom to talk in our own language. We shall enter the field of discussion with confidence, with no doubt as to the

real meaning of what we are saying".

With reference to this phenomenon Carnoy (1974) argues that the curriculum and language of the colonial school is not surprisingly the same as that of the metropole country. Primary schools, he observes stress socialization in European languages, values, and the degradation of all that is native.

Even at the present time it has been noted that in many colonial, and ex-colonial schools, attempts are still being made to prevent the native from using his language in schools. Children are still taught in alien languages. A few examples of this practice will follow.

In a field study of twenty-six schools in the Chiapas Highlands of Mexico, Modiano (1964-1965, 1973), among other factors notes that the curriculum appears to be slightly related to the children's experiences. This is particularly noticeable in the Language Arts Program, which uses the Spanish language in the teaching of all subjects, beyond the prepatory year. She observes that by using Spanish the teachers tend to put comprehension of the subject matter beyond the children's reach, as the children's first language is an Indian language. Some teachers, she points out claimed that they had been instructed by their inspectors of the schools to drop all use of the local language by the second grade, in order to speed the mastery of Spanish.

Berghe (1978) refers to the same phenomenon in Southern Peru, he cites the case of the Indian children, by saying that ever since formal education existed in Peru, it has always been considered axiomatic that Spanish should be the exclusive medium of instruction, despite evidence of the benefits of teaching literacy through the child's mother tongue (Quechua), literacy continues to be taught in a language alien to the Indian child. Berghe, points out, the fact that teachers are bilingual, but they are Mestizo, who regard Spanish culture as superior to Quechua culture.

Dare (1977) in his study of the language programs currently in use in some Nigerian Nursery Schools, in Africa, informs that of the thirteen schools he surveyed, only four of the schools in the study included the vernacular in their scheme of work. In the other schools language instruction in both the first and second years of nursery school was in the English language. In view of these results it becomes obvious that most schools in the study lay major emphasis in English in their language programs. Dare questions whether these young children have sufficient proficiency in their own language to have formed a base of concepts upon which a foreign language can be built. He also noted that while particular care is taken with the oral English instruction, in order to give the children some foundation in this foreign language, it may also be questioned, whether the children will have acquired enough English to give them adequate comprehension of spoken words before introducing reading, especially at the nursery level. This point was supported by Moyle (1973), who claims that weakness in any of the language arts, will inevitably lead to difficulty with the reading process, he points out that a child who has difficulty with spoken language, is at a disadvantage in learning to read from the very beginning.

B. The Language Situation in Belize

The historical influence which have affected the language policies of the other European dependencies has also been inherited in Belize, a British colony until recently. The traditional language policy in the schools is reflected in the exclusive use of English language as the medium of instruction in schools, from the first years of schooling, despite the fact that Belizan children come to school equiped with language pattern and skills different from English. Another factor which should be pointed out, is the continous use, even at the present time of foreign-designed curriculum materials in the schools.

As has already been documented in the first part of the study, Belizean people are the descendents of African slaves, Mestizo refugees, Carib refugees, and native Maya and Ketchi Indians. Among the Belizean people then, are wide differences in ancestry, historical background, cultural patterns and languages. Many of our children entering school for the first time have never been exposed to any other language but their own being spoken. Yet, because Belize has been a British colony, children are expected to be taught in English from their first years of schooling, at the expense of their indigenous languages. Like most of the former overseas British territories, Belize follows a similar pattern of education to that of Britain.

Because in many parts of Belize, language usage is a symbolic marker of ethnic group membership (LePage 1972; Koenig 1975), several writers have suggested that on the social level the use of English in Belizean schools; as though it were everyone's first language, poses a threat to the development of children's sense of identification with other members of their ethnic group (The Reporter 1973, 1978). In addition teachers are often critical of children who come to class speaking broad Creole (Le Page 1972), or Spanish (Rubinstein 1979), and perhaps unintentionally, tend to class these children as "slow", or "lazy". This classification often seems to carry with it the expectation that these children will lack ability, and this expectation is often "self-fulfilling" in some cases. The result might be failure in school or leaving school.

Rubenstein (1979) in a study of subtractive bilingualism in Northern Belize, has surveyed the impact of English language instruction on Spanish-speaking children of Corozal Town in Belize. In his study he concludes that the learning of English by Spanish-speaking children in Corozal Town, is socially subtractive, because English is often taught with the intention that it replaces the student's first language, instead of supplementing it. The cognitive enhancement view of bilingualism does not recognize that the social setting of the bilingual experience may have cognitive consequences, yet in most cases bilingualism is seen as enriching a person's linguistic environment. Jane Miller (1980) contends that claims have been made that the conscious mastery of a language is an intellectual discipline in itself. Bilingual children are often more sensitive to the appropriateness of their speech and the effect it produces on listeners. They can also become aware earlier than other children of the structures within one particular language system than with those of their native language.

Koenig (1975) in her recent sociolinguistic survey of Corozal Town in Belize, shows that for the majority of the town's population, English is a second language. She found that only a little under five percent of those sampled indicated learning English as a first language. Three percent noted that this was at the same time as they acquired Spanish. Twenty-seven percent reported Belize Creole as their first language, and additionally the survey showed relatively little inter-group interaction among adults in Corozal Town.

In this same study, in a sample of 86 households of Spanish ethnic background, fully eighty-six percent reported speaking only Spanish to their spouses. Likewise, eighty-nine percent of those households of Creole ethnic background reported using only Creole with their spouses (Koenig 1975:61-63). Ninety-one percent of the individuals in the survey of parents of Spanish ethnic background reported speaking with their children exclusively in Spanish, while ninety-five percent of parents surveyed from the Creole ethnic group said that they addressed their children only in Belize Creole.

Despite the fact that most children in Corozal Town learn either Spanish or Creole as their first language, and in spite of the relative homogeneity of their early language experiences, they enter schools in which English is the principal medium of instruction. The teacher's system of language use in school make this situation even more difficult for the children, in that only two percent of the teachers in Corozal Town reported ever using Spanish or Creole in the classroom (Koenig 1975).

In conclusion it should be pointed out that despite the fact that standard English is not the first language of most Belizeans, it continues to be the prescribed instructional language in schools throughout Belize. This remains true despite much recent concern about the consequences of such a policy. This approach seems ill-adopted to the language needs of the Belizean child. Another factor which should be pointed out is that Belizean educators have continously been able to ignore the fact that such a system is innappropriate to children of different language patterns and skills. The implications of the continued use of English as the basic instructional medium for schools have been explored over the past few years by both Belizeans and non-Belizeans (Buhler and Hadel 1975; Young 1973; Rubenstein 1979; and others). For example Buhler (1975) a Catholic priest who has worked in the field of education in Belize for many years, has this to say on this topic:

> "English continues to be taught in Belize as though it were the vernacular or mother tongue of the child. It is not. English is a foreign language to most of our youngsters beginning school, and consequently it should be taught as such. Belizean youngsters begin school already equipped with certain language skills other than English. To assume that Belizean children come to school already knowing the fundamentals of spoken English is a terrible pedagogical mistake".

Other writers on this topic have noted that it may be undesirable to continue this language policy because of its implications on individual development. Thus Hadel (1973) suggests that it is precisely because of the failure to teach English as a second language in Belizean schools, that Belizean youngsters appear to be unable to keep apace of their British and American counterparts in the development of reading and writing skills.

Young (1973) suggests that the gap between the children's school language and home language usage produces a 'comprehension lag'. He points out that this lag might best be elimated by teaching Creole children to recognize the rules underlying differences in English and Creole linguistic structure and use. Young (1973), Buhler and Hadel (1975), suggest the use of textbooks which systematically review the structural features of English, Creole, Carib, and the other languages spoken in Belize.

In the light of the studies presented above, it is suggested that the present situation existing now in Belizean schools, regarding the language policy, should be reviewed, and perhaps replaced by the reforms advocated by the above writers; that native speakers of Creole, Maya, Garifuna, and Spanish be taught English as a second language in Belizean schools.

The research done on the related literature, and the preceeding discussions on the Belizean language policy used in the Infant schools, seems to support the proposed premise, that the reading textbooks used for teaching reading in Belize, are the legacy of a British system of education. The last group of studies reviewed in this section (Rubenstein 1979; Hadel and Buhler 1973, 1975; Young 1973; and Koenig 1975) strongly support one of the premises stated earlier, that the continued assumption that English is the first language of Belizean is false; this fact has also been documented in Chapters II and III, where the historical and cultural nature of the Belizean society was discussed.

C. The Creole Language in the Colonial Context

Creole languages seem to be unique to colonial or post-colonial situations. Because so many Belizeans speak Belize Creole as a native language the following section discusses Creole in the Colonial Context. A creole language is one that has come into existence, no matter by which of several possible processes as a result of the contact of speakers of different languages (Craig 1978). Creole languages recognized in this way tend to be relatively new languages, spoken habitually mainly by persons who happen to be natives of newly developing socio-economic communities, and in such communities there is usually some older socio-politically dominant and more prestigious language that has originally been or has become the official language of the territorial area. The Webster Dictionary (1980) defines Creole language as a language based on two or more languages. Winford (1974) expressed opinion that the term 'Creole', in the context of language studies is perhaps best used merely as a convenient label to describe a number of languages, which developed in the Caribbean and other areas of the world, in similar types of socio-political and economic situations, involving contact between European colonizers and groups of widely different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Lowe (1981) contends that since the Pidgins and Creole languages of the colonial countries arose out of European expansion into Africa, Asia, and America, in the 15th century, the stigma that attaches these languages is rooted in the phenomenon of imperialism.

The above theory has also been documented by Adler (1977), who has stated that in reviewing some of the names by which Pidgins have been called, writers come across a well-known phenomenon; if you want to suppress somebody if you want to exploit him ruthlessly, if you want to treat him as if he were not human, you first ascribe characteristics to him which he has not got, but which if he had them, would make him what you pretend him to be. Adler goes on saying that even the most ignorant slaveholder knows that the native has got language, and that gift of language is one which belongs to man alone, therefore the oppressor has to belittle the speech of the native, and call it all sorts of depreciating names; and to pretend that the native's words and the ways in which he puts them together are not really language, though what else it is would be hard for the oppressor to say.

The outcome of cultural and linguistic domination as Fanon (1973) has ably shown, is that the oppressed internalize the contempt that the oppressors have for them, which results in colonial people being ashamed of their home language. Until recently schools in these colonies absolutely forbade students to speak their native language in class and sometimes even in the school yard, and taught in English as if it were the first language.

Throughout the Caribbean today the Euorpean languages are the language of law, religon, education, and above all they are the written languages. Hymes (1973:13) notes that one of the crimes of colonialism has been to persuade the colonized that they are inferior. Indigenous languages and especially Creole have suffered in this respect. The editors of the *Caribbean Issues* 1974, in the introduction state that the Creole language, or such forms of speech have been regarded in the West Indies as inferior, bastardized versions of the standard language, not to be employed for important purposes. They believe that their lowly status is made worse by the fact that standard European languages, have long been the official languages of these communities.

Of importance also is the attitude of the population towards the vernacular they use. Carrington (1974) believes that a negative self-concept may result from the use of a language which has negative value ratings in a society, yet he says that steps can be taken to enhance the prestige of a negatively rated language. A strong prejudice may arise against a language if it has not been written. Yet provisions and use of stabilized linguistically-based orthography can be a first step towards changing people's attitudes. Dictionaries and publications, and so forth written on the vernacular, can place it on some footing towards becoming an official language. Such efforts can have a tremendous effect on the attitude of the people to the vernacular language they speak.

According to Khleif (1979) language denotes status; it is an index of social rank, of the capacity to command difference. An inferior language means an inferior person, a psychologically handicapped one, perhaps an economically circumscribed one as well. He believes that an attack on ones language is but an attack on ones personal integrity, and on ones group integrity, for it is essentially a reflection of his group affiliations.

A language, Khleif asserts, in a very real sense is the pedigree of a people. For the Creole person it unlocks centuries of African-Anglo experience of a unique way, symbolizing the world and expressing human emotions and social and racial relations. Language is both the social history of a people's past and the interpretation of its future. Language creates consciousness; a native language ties a people more closely to its landscape and breeds definable loyalties to it. On the other hand an adopted language is for the native writer a kind of prison, for it is the creation of a different civilization.

V. PEDAGOGICAL CONCERNS

A. Second Language Instruction

Language and How it is Learnt

The way we approach the teaching and reading of language will be influenced or even determined by what we believe language to be, by the particular informal theory we have about it which seem to be relevant to the particular problem we are faced with. Language is a complex and many sided thing, and at the present time there is no all-embracing theory which brings every aspect of the problem within a single coherent and mutually consistent set of propositions (Corder 1977:81).

Language has always fascinated men, for many stories exist about its origin, how it changes, and what powers it can have over people. Within society, language both divides and unites, and within almost every educational system it holds a prominent position. Linguistics such as R. Wardhaugh(1974) sometimes define language as a system of arbitrary vocal symbols used for human communication. Language must by systematic or otherwise people could not learn a language nor could a language be used consistantly. Every language actually can be described with reference to two systems, one of sounds and the other meanings.

Herschel (1965) informs us that language consists entirely of making symbols which represent objects, activities or ideas. For example, he says that the deaf have a language for direct communication, which consists entirely of making signs which typically have no reference to words. He further states that any language which consists of words has two related series of symbols, one made of sounds and the other odd-shaped, written forms which are looked at. It is possible to relate the written symbol directly with the object rather than the sound of the word, and development in reading ability tends to at least suppress the use of sounds between the written symbol and the idea. In learning to read, however the three written symbol, sound symbol, and idea represented are closely related.

Herschel (1965) believes that when you listen to an unfamiliar language you get the impression of a torrent of disorganized noises carrying no sense whatever. For the native speaker, it is quite otherwise. He pays little attention to sounds but concerns himself instead with some solution which lies behind the act of speech, and for him somehow reflected on it. Language is learned behaviour. All normal children are born with the ability to make sounds, but the sounds take shape and become meaningful only through the constant learning and repetition of these sounds which produce responses. A baby probably learns to say "water", because he associates the arbitrary sound symbol with substance of water.

Learning a language is itself a matter of degree rather than an either-or situation. There is a great distance between the ability of a person who knows and can use only a few words in simple concrete situations, and the ability of the scholar who knows thousands of words and can understand them.

Native speakers of a language are not conscious of each sound or word they say, nor of the sequence of the sounds of words. They are conscious primarily of the ideas or thoughts they are trying to convey. The stringing together of sounds in certain positions is generally unconscious. It should be apparent from what has been said that there is a difference between learning one's own language and learning a second language. The child learning his native language normally listen to it all day over a period of five to six years before beginning school.

The ingrained habit of one's native language; of making certain sounds or of placing sounds in certain positions, often causes serious conflict or interference with the learning of a new language. Although similar sounds may exist in one's native tongue, they may be found in different positions in the second language. The sound system may operate in a different way. For example, English uses stress or accent to convey meaning. The same is true of the structure or grammer of the language. The forms of words (morphology) and the order or sequence of words (syntax) are important in English, yet may have no importance or mean something quite different in another language.

Corder (1977) believes that language should normally start after the learner has already achieved a command of the 'formation rules', or code of his mother tongue, in most cases he should have already learnt to read and write in his mother tongue. In this way he will have acquired an implicit knowledge of the nature of human language.

Different languages vary condiserably in the degree to which they differ, but there is no measuring tool to measure the degree of differences in a rigorous fashion. The ease or difficulty of learning something is not simply related to the nature of the task but has components of motivation, intelligence, aptitude, quality of teaching and teaching materials. More importantly it depends on the expectations the learner has of success. Certain languages may be considered difficult to learn by members of a certain group. The historical development of two languages from some single common source is no guarantee that their formal characteristics will, in all, or indeed most respects be similar (Corder 1977:227). It may be possible that languages which are unrelated may resemble each other in respect of some feature of their components, and again genetically-related languages may differ in many respects.

Contrastive analysis of language is a linguistically analytical technique developed by Bloomfield (1914, 1923, 1942) to provide a detailed analysis of languages. This method was subsequently adopted and elaborated by other linguists. To analyse a language, a linguist reduces it to its basic unit of sound (phonemes) and meaning (morphemes), to discover relationships, or similarities among the constituent parts (Roderick 1980:3). The result of these findings are then drawn up into a theory; a description of the language system, and used as a basis for determining similarities and differences of the particular language.

This linguistic-analytical technique was transferred to language teaching because linguists and applied linguists, for example, (Fries 1945; Lado 1957; Bloomfield 1933) argued that language teaching theory and methodology should be tied to linguistic theory. Fries (1942) believed that the most efficient way to select, describe, order and present teaching materials was on the basis of a linguistic description of language.

The contrastive analysis hypothesis assumes that the principle source of interference in second language learning comes from an individual's mother tongue (Fries 1945; Bloomfield 1933). The individual transfers the structure and systems from the primary language, to the second language he is learning. Such transfer results in error when the grammers are different. Instead of learning the second language system directly, the learner tries to impose the first language system on that of the new language being learnt.

In the general introduction to the *New Routes to English* Sampson (1979), states that first language facilitation or interference within the second language occurs when the learner makes the quite natural assumption that the new language is like the one already known and that the rules of pronunciation and sentence creation in the first language will work for the second language too.

In learning a new language the learner usually has to contend with at least two languages, the mother tongue and the target language. These may fall into the same broad type as far as their morphological characteristics are concerned, but be strikingly different in respect of their syllable structure. They may differ considerably in their lexical structure, but yet be similar in many respects. Discovering the differences between the mother tongue and the target language might be a useful way of looking at language learning. Lado (1957) adopts this position when he says:

> "We assume that the student who comes in contact with a foreign language will find some feature of it quite easy and others extremely difficult. Those elements that are similar to his native language will be simple for him, and those elements that are different will be difficult".

In addition to learning the differences between two languages, the learner has to discover similarities. Similarities between languages may be very general or abstract on the one hand or superficial and trivial on the other (Corder 1977:23). In the comparison of languages the correspondence of similarity may be patchy and irregular, and may be more general and abstract than can be expected.

Learning a language also involves learning the rules governing the organization of sounds in the target language.

The difficulty of learning the pronunciation of the target language may also reflect the degree of difference in the ways the mother tongue and the target language organize their sound systems. No two speakers of any one particular language will use exactly the same range of sounds expressed in the particular language. Every language, dialect, or idiolect imposes a different segmentation on the various dimensions of sounds and articulation. The muscular apparatus of the vocal tract acquires certain habits of producing sounds which centre on certain parts of the articulatory organs.

In English and other European languages, patterns of pitch change are associated with longer stretches of language, phrases or sentences (Corder 1977). In some languages the movement of pitch is also associated with 'words'. These are the so-called 'tone languages', Chinese, Yoruba, and Burmese are associated with this. In these languages the same sequence of sounds in a word, may be spoken with a small range of contrasting pitch patterns or tunes, each one giving a different meaning for the word. The use of variations in stress can also account for major differences in the sound systems of languages. Languages vary considerably in the rules of placing stress within words. In the Spanish language the stress is usually on the second to the last syllable, while English has very complex rules for the placement of stress in words.

Studies with monolingual English-speaking subjects have shown that beginning reading achievement is related in part to the reader's skill in auditory discrimination, i.e. the ability to distinguish between similar sounding words and phrases (Wepman 1960). However, the auditory discrimination problems of Spanish-speaking children who speak English minimally or not at all are less well understood. Although the phonological system of English and Spanish differ, few research studies have been done to investigate how these differences might be related to auditory discrimination and beginning reading problems. Studies have documented that Spanish-speaking children experience reading problems in an English-based curriculum and that they frequently score low on standard reading tests (U.S.A. Commission on Civil Rights, 1971). Spanish-speaking children can be expected to experience auditory discrimination problems because of their language different background (Kramer and Schell 1982). These authors contend that although there are similarities in the sound system of Spanish and English, the phonological differences between the two may lead the Spanish speaker to misinterpret unfamiliar English sounds. Some of those potentially confusing sounds were identified in a study done by Kramer and Schell (1979).

The results of this study show that Spanish-speaking children have some auditory discrimination problems. Many of these appear to be serious enough to warrant specific attention. For example the English allophenes for V and SH, are very likely to cause sound confusions. The consonant clusters SP, ST, LD, ND, at the end of words seemed difficult for the Spanish-speaking child to pronounce. In this study the results which ranked eighteen pairs of sound contrast (e.g. n-ng) in order of difficulty showed that the contrasts, V-B, CH-SH, and S-SP, were the most difficult for the subjects to discriminate. These findings and those of similar studies could be of potential use for educators planning educational programs for children whose first language is Spanish.

Herschel is of the opinion that knowledge of the nature of language, and observation of the conflicts caused by the habits of one's native language, have given rise to some basic principles of language learning. These are stated here briefly:

1. Since the spoken language is primarily the sounds of the language, it should take predecence in our teaching.
2. In addition to the sound system, learners must be taught the structure system of the language. For example differences in rythm and intonation in connected speech add to the difficulties of pronunciation and understanding.
3. Language learning includes learning the culture, gestures, or spoken expressions which give added meaning to the words and sentences. For example, an intonation pattern may express anger in one language, but delight in another.

Second Language Learning in the Creole Situation

Recent linguistic studies on the Creole language based on transformational grammer have established that West Indian dialect is not really a dialect but a Creole language; as was defined earlier in Chapter IV. The vocabulary say of Jamaican Creole is English-based, but the grammar, as described by Bailey (1966) in her book *Jamaican Creole Syntax*, shows a profound difference.

In order to understand the peculiar nature of the difficulties encountered in teaching Creole children English, it is esential to understand something of the over-all linguistic problems which are faced by the Creole speaker. According to Creary (1965), the basic language difficulty in teaching children whose first language is Creole, falls in three major categories of forms and content in language; namely sentence structure, morphology, and vocabulary.

1. Sentence Structure, according Creary this seems fundamental to the whole problem. The syntax of the Creole language is not that of standard English, the grammatical categories and practices of one cannot be transferred direct to the other. Both are complete systems of expression, according to respective environments, needs and cultures. For example, standard English favours complex sentence patterns, linked together by conjunctive elements, Creole uses few conjunctive words and favours a sequence of simple

sentences.

2. Morphology is the area of language by which subtle distinctions of meaning may be expressed by a single alteration in the forms of words. It includes the system of word-formation elements and processes in a language. For example words like verb and verbose, have a certain relation to each other. Creole does not use such inflextual suffixes of standard English. For example the plural of the word in most cases uses the word "dem". The plural for the word "mangoes" is "the mango dem" The addition of suffixes does not correspond to the dialect.
3. Vocabulary: The Creole vocabulary is simple and straight forward, wherein you say what you mean in a few words.

The study of the various West Indian Creoles reveals an interesting factor to linguistics. A great similarity of structure and morphology exists among Creole languages, whether they are related to English, Dutch, Spanish, or French (Creary 1965). It appears that all these Creole languages may have arisen from some common form of speech, perhaps a coastal West African language. They all seem to preserve some basic form of syntax and morphological pattern.

Teaching English to West Indian students constitutes a major concern among West Indian educators. Craig (1973) contends that the main problem for the Creole speaker, is that teachers of reading often require that the students do two complex things simultaneously:

1. To learn the relationship between written or printed shapes and the meanings they represent.
2. To percieve or vocalize the latter meanings in terms of English sounds, English word forms, and English syntax.

Craig believes that the Creole speaker learning to read, both the above points are new, and have to be learnt.

Carrington (1977) is of the opinion that the use of one language has never been an impediment to the proper acquisition of a second language. What is an obstacle is failure to recognize the separateness of two languages when planning a language teaching program.

Teaching English as a second language methodology cannot be applied to the teaching of English to West Indian students in the same manner as it is applied to say, speakers of Cantonese. Both the Creole speaker and the Cantonese speaker experience problems in mastering the receptive and productive skills of communication in English, but for markedly different reasons. Awareness of the causes of these differences are of utmost importance to the development of a successful methodology in teaching English to Creole speakers.

An important consideration on teaching English to Creole children has been pointed out by some Caribbean educators. If the Creole language bears no significant lexical and grammatical relationship to the standard language, then the problem of teaching the standard is essentially that of teaching a foreign language. This has been pointed out by both Craig (1978) and Carrington (1974), the attitudes then, of the community towards Creole in such a situations are generally more favourable than they would otherwise be. In such situations therefore, school programs tend to be more realistic and more rationally designed to achieve results.

If, however the Creole situation of the other type, where there is significant lexical or grammatical relationship between the Creole and the standard, then the educational problem tends to assume different proportions. The status of the child as a foreign learner of the standard language is not likely to be clearly recognized, even though the linguistic difference between Creole and standard will be obvious, but the traditional attitude of regarding Creole as a debased form of the standard is likely to affect the implementation of adequate educational policies (Craig 1978). In this later type of situation even if the obvious differences between Creole and the standard language suggest a foreign-language approach to teaching of the standard, there are still likely to be problems arising.

In West Indian territories, where Creole is spoken, the school syllabus often times mention the need for children to be taught English as a second language. It is still true however that in most places, not much evidence is to be found that teachers are practising this.

In educational planning the challenges posed by the Creole language in these Caribbean areas, has to do with working out the implications of such language use in education. When Creole language studies first appeared in the 1950's it was felt in some quarters that one implication for the English-speaking Caribbean was that territories with clearly distinctive Creoles ought to use those Creoles in primary education; this was the expectation held out for example,for Jamaica and some other territories in the 1953 UNESCO monograph on the use of vernacular languages in education, but Caribbean educators at that time probably had an instinctive understanding of societal attitudes that prevented them from making use of this recommendation. In the Caribbean today no territory has so far thought it feasable to use solely Creole as the medium of instruction, and the question has been; how best might the child, in the context of the Creole language be taught English in school, without having his natural language development become inhibited? Another factor which educators and writers have pointed out is that to the speaker of English-based Creole, standard English is neither a native nor a foreign language. Most children can, by school age comprehend some amount of English, even though they do not speak it; exactly how much of such comprehension can the teacher count on, and what effect does the child's Creole have on such comprehension?

The language of the majority of people all over the West Indies is the Creole form of communication, though not all the territories have preserved the extreme varieties of the Creole language to be found in for example, Belize, Jamaica, and Guyana, the influence of Creole language is deep-seated, and is to be percieved even in the English of the educated. In Belize this extreme form of Creole is known as 'broad Creole', and is spoken by the majority of Belizeans. The educational system all over the Caribbean has consistently been able to ignore the fact of the Creole language; this continued ignoring of the Creole in the 20th century is in reality a part of the chronic neglect of West Indian primary education. An analysis of the language arts curriculum materials, especially those used for teaching reading do not support the policy of teaching English as a second language in these schools (Carrington 1973; Craig 1974).

In expressing this concern, Caribbean educators have started examining curriculum materials; especially the textbooks used in these schools. Chief among some of the Caribbean textbooks researchers are (Carrington 1972, 1974, 1979; Carrington and Borely 1974; Craig 1972, 1974; and Milne-Holme 1981). In an article written on *Comments on Language Arts Textbooks* used in Trinidad, Knight notes that most of the textbooks used to teach reading to these Creole oriented students, have not been written with their situation in mind, and consequently are unsuited to the purpose:

> "Unaware of the linguistic background of our children, the writers cannot provide a satisfactory course in English for them.... A large number of

language arts textbooks used in the schools, contain material that is culturally errelevant".

In developing this thesis, Knight (1974) explains that the most obvious form of irrelevance is the reference to flora and fauna found outside the Caribbean. "We object", he says "to our children being required to give the colour of hollyberries, heather, and chestnuts. Few of our children have ever heard of 'Cox's pippin', 'ice'skating', 'having tea', or familiarity with the four seasons".

The experiences described in these books are largely irrelevant to West Indian children. Knight, advocates an entire new approach to language teaching including the preparation of materials, taking into consideration the peculiar nature of the Creole population and the Creole language. Craig (1979) believes that research in the Caribbean should be directed to the critical examination of curriculum materials used in the language arts program, the analysis of the illustrations, structures, linguistic features and cultural relevance of these materials, seems a crucial step towards developing a more appropriate and realistic direction in the educational system of the English-speaking Caribbean.

B. The Reading Process

The teaching of reading to Infants in Belize, follows traditional approaches developed in the English-speaking world. One cannot examine textbooks used in Belize without referring to a context of intentions reflected in the textbooka used in the process of teaching reading. The major methods of reading pedagogy used in Belize are reviewed here. They are premises which Belizean teachers seem to hold to as they use the set of basal readers prescribed to them.

According to Cheek and Cheek (1980) the reading act requires complex thought processes through which a person interprets written or printed symbols as meaningful sounds and comprehends these sounds as thought units in order to understand the message being presented. The reading process has been researched and defined by many writers. There are various theories and models of reading instructions, including the psychometric models of Holmes and Singer, and psychological models, which include the ideas of the behaviouralists, such as Skinner. In addition, the understanding of the reading process has also been defined by the research of the linguistic models,by researchers such as Bloomfield, Chomsky and others. All of these models have had an impact on the definitions of the reading process.

One of older but most frequently used definitions of reading is that of William Gray (1965) who contends that reading is a four-step process that includes:

1. Word Preception: The reader perceives the printed word.
2. Comprehension: The reader understand the meaning of the word as used in the context.
3. Reaction: The reader reacts to the idea presented by the writer.

4. Integration: The reader integrates the new ideas gained from reading into his or her personal perspective, and applies it to daily activities.

A teacher who comments that a student reads well but cannot understand what has been read has a very limited perspective of the reading process. The classroom teacher must realize that reading instruction involves the development of both word recognition skills and comprehension skills. The student is not reading unless the words that are recognized are understood as well. Reading then is a simple, but a complex process, especially for those children beginning reading who must learn to read in a foreign language.

Many approaches for teaching reading have been presented by different writers. Among these we find the language experience approach, the individualized reading approach, the multi-sensory approach and many others. In order to develop a reading vocabulary, students must be taught to recognize printed words. In developing word recognition skills teachers must assist students in developing a variety of word recognition skills so that students become aware and prepared to decode unknown words.

In Belizean schools, word recognition skills seems to be more heavily relied upon, in the teaching of beginning reading. It may be that the comprehension aspect of word recognition is not thought of as a problem by teachers of young children, though this study demonstrates otherwise. A few of the word recognition skill used in Belizean Infant schools, will be briefly looked at:

The Phonic Analysis Approach

The phonics approach is the term used by specialist in reading to refer to the correspondence of letters and speech sounds (Aukerman 1981). When we speak of 'teaching phonics', we generally mean the teaching of consonant and vowel sounds, short and long vowels, consonant digraphs and the sounds they represent. The phonic-analysis approach is used by many Belizean teachers to help children recognize words, even though some of the reading textbooks do not seem to cater for enough practise in using this approach. Teachers are compelled to use this method more extensively, as it seems to be an easier way for Belizean children to learn to recognize words, than the sight-word approach.

Sight-Word Approach

In defining sight-approach to reading as a procedure for recognizing words, it is necessary to note that this procedure or group of skills is sometimes considered a method for teaching beginning reading. This method is based on the premise that the student is taught to recognize words by sight rather than through some analytic process; such as phonic or structural analysis (Cheek and Cheek 1980). As a procedure for recognition of words, it is defined as the development of the reading skills necessary to remember words that occur most frequently in reading, and that are not easily analyzed through other procedures. It has been noted that when this method is used solely and extensively, children whose first language is not English, tend to memorize the words. In Belizean Infant Schools it has been noted that children can read words; but in many cases cannot understand what they are reading; since reading becomes a repetition of words.

Structural Analysis

According to Cheek and Cheek (1980) structural analysis skills rely on the use of word elements or parts to aid in recognition of unknown words. Structural analysis differs from phonic analysis, in that larger units are dealt with in analyzing the structure of the word. Analysis of the structure of words is useful in determining meaning. Structural analysis is almost always used in conjunction with one or more of the other word recognition skills.

A Few Words on the Basal Readers

The Basal Reader is not just one book, but a whole package of books and supplementary materials that is used to teach reading. The term is American in origin, in other countries, they are generally known as reading schemes, and may not be so elaborate as the American series. At the beginning of 1980, there were fifteen major American Basal Readers series; each composed of a series of fifteen or sixteen books, ranging in size and difficulty, from the small paperback preprimers, through the grades. The pupils have counterparts in the teachers' editions, with detailed instructions and suggestions for teaching the lessons that accompany the selections in the pupils books. These books carry detailed instructions of the scope and sequence of the reading skills that are to be taught daily at each grade at the Elementary school. Many schools in Belize have depended on the Basal Readers as their chief resource for helping children to learn to read and for providing the reading materials for reading. American Basal readers have also been implemented in other developing countries, where they are extensively used. In many Caribbean areas Basal readers have been imported from the U.S.A., and England to be used in the schools. It is a fact that in Belize Basal readers, which have been outdated in the U.S.A., and England are commonly used, this practice will be discussed in detail giving the name of the readers, publishing company, and date of publishing in the following chapter of the study.

C. Reading Textbooks as Socializing Agents

The term socialization as used in this study will identify the process by which the infant child slowly develops a set of attitudes and values, likes and dislikes, goals and purposes, patterns of response, and an abiding concept of self. More formally socialization is that process where by one internalizes the norms and values of the dominant culture, and prehaps of various subgroups, so that a distinct self emerges, unique to the individual (Cooley 1902). Cooley believes that the individuals preceptions of the judgement of others (society) and the reactions which the child experiences to these judgements, form the basis of the development of self image.

An obvious source of transmitting cultural values to children is in the school, were the curriculum is largely composed of reading materials. In some countries, especially in the last decade, attention is being focused on the biasis incorporated sometimes unintentionally in curriculum materials. In the United States the dominance of white American values and the neglect of contributions of minority cultures have been observed in elementary school textbooks, and have documented by (Green 1971; Larrick 1965; Banks 1969; and others). Landes (1965) discusses the Latin-American child alienation from the standard school textbooks, where the names, skin colours, foods, clothing, and family structures fail to reflect the cultural values of Mexican, Negro, American Indian and other California minority groups included in her study.

In some West Indian territories the notion of "relevance" of curriculum materials has been seriously criticized, as textbooks used in most of these schools have often been designed abroad, and thus were never really intended for use by the West Indian child (Carrington 1974; Milne-Holme 1981; Green 1977; Craig 1974).

The above researches have also indicated that an early age the child is extremely vulnerable to the impressions portrayed by these curriculum materials. The child has a tender grasp not only of the written word, but also the language of standard English, and a vague concept of himself (Baronberg 1971). Characters in the readers are said to play on the child's consciousness, and through identification with the characters, the child comes to explore his or her own world of experiences. The fusion of word and meaning, may under the above circumstances be absent, because of the irrelevance and meaninglessness of the world symbolized in the Basal readers used; thus making the task of reading more difficult than it ought to be (Knight; Carrington; and Borely 1974). These latter authors point out that all too frequently, readers used in West Indian schools reflect the stereotypes of western culture, with a chauvinism that few educators could ignore, even after a brief analysis of these readers.

The culture that is given implicit value in the classroom conforms to the models of western society, particularly that of the English culture. Historically in British territories, the school systems are instituted by the British colonial government and the curriculum issued to colonized children is not adapted to the needs of the local community and ignores the cultural differences that exists between the inhabitants of metropolitan England and the inhabitants of the colonies. English language and English values are incorporated into these textbooks that are used for reading. The images given in the text are divorced from the existential world of the child, and conform to the structure of dominance in the Enlgish speaking culture. This arrangement is an extension of cultural imperialism or colonization, as children are immersed in a foreign culture and thus, if the child learns what the classroom offers, she or he is alienated from his culture (Carrington; Knight; Borely 1974).

Wietzman et al. (1977) point to the fact that picture books play an important role in early socialization and are a vehicle for presentation of social values to the young child. Through books children learn about the world outside of their immediate environment, they learn about what is right and what is wrong, and they learn what is expected of children of their own age, and the image of what they should be. Children's stories have always been a means for perpetuating the fundamental cultural values and myths. Stories have been a stimulus for fantasy, imagination, and achievement. The position that books are active socialization agents is also accepted by McClelland(1961), who reports that a strong positive relationship between achievement images in children stories and subsequent economic development, lends support to the view that the materials presented in children's literature may affect the later behaviour. Characters in the stories or readers are said to play an important part on the child consciousness. Through identification with the characters, the child comes to explore his world of experience. In using such foreign materials, the fusion of word and meaning is often absent, because of the irrelevance and meaninglessness of the world symbolized in the readers.

VI. METHODS

A. Introduction

Field work for collection of data in connection with the study was conducted in Belize, Central America, during the month of December 1981, through February 1982. A letter from the Department of Educational Foundations was forwarded to the Ministry of Education in Belize confirming field work assignment in Belize. Appropriate letters were also dispatched to authorized parties in Belize, by Doctor K. Bacchus, seeking permission for the reasearcher to visit schools, and to visit the Belize Teachers' Training College. to be able to conduct field work in the form of data collection, and seeking the cooperation of those parties connected with this research.

When the researcher reached Belize, she reported to the Ministry of Education in Belmopan before proceeding to the schools. Personnel at the Ministry of Education there informed her that they had not recieved any letters from the Educational Foundations at the University of Alberta. Fortunately the researcher had copies of such letters which she immediately handed over. The researcher was then given permission to visit the schools, but was requested not to visit schools until the second week in January as schools were having exams then, and after the Xmas break the first week of school in January would not be conducive to visiting schools, they claimed.

After some initial difficulties in obtaining permission from the Principal of the Belize Teachers' Training College to interview the teachers there, arrangements were finally made to interview all Infant school teachers, who were then in the training program. Of the 80 teachers, 66 completed questionnaires.

B. The Readers

Selecting Readers

Five set of samples of the main readers used to teach reading in Infant I (Grade I), in Belize were collected for the purpose of a content analysis. These books were chosen since they comprise the main books used for reading. The criteria for collecting these readers drew support from the advice of personnel at the Ministry of Education in Belize, consultaion with the Managers of schools, and an interview with principal teachers of Catholic and non-Catholic schools. They agreed that the following readers were the main Infant readers used to teach reading to Infant I children in Belize. These books used in schools have been prescribed by the Church and the State. For the past two years, Government has been encouraging all schools to use the *Nelson's West Indian Reader, Book I* for teaching reading to beginners. Many teachers seemed reluctant to use this book. Government schools have been requested to use this book, so they have no alternative but to use this book. The Managers for the Denominational Schools, which comprise most

Infant Schools seemed to be adhering to the books which they have had in the past. But over the past two years, we find many more schools, including the Catholic schools using the *Nelson's West Indian Reader*.

The following describes these readers, and the publishing company, and the schools where these readers are mostly being used at the present.

1. *The Nelson's West Indian Reader* Book I, Jamaica, Nelson and Sons Ltd., used by all Government in Belize, some Protestant schools, and a few Catholic schools.
2. We Look and See, Scott Forsman and Company,*The Basic Cathedral Readers*, edition 1965, used by Catholic schools.
3. *The Ladybird Series*, Lucky Dip, Longman Caribbean Ltd. Printed in England, and used by Wesley schools, and some Nazarene schools.
4. *The McKee Readers*, Tip, Houghton, Mifflin and Company U.S.A., and used by some Catholic schools, Anglican schools, and Methodist schools.
5. *Ginn and Company* U.S.A. A Duck is a Duck, 1977 edition used by St. Catherine's Elementary school.

The Content Analysis of the Readers

In analysing these five readers, and their accompanying guidebooks, it was decided that instead of featuring or generalizing judgement with scaled numerical numbers, specific examples, with summarize, and discussions would be recorded as evidence of judgement. This approach in analysing the content of these readers seemed a more holistic approach, since a look in particular learning resources for inadequacies, errors, strengths and an overall impression of the material would be undertaken. It was hoped that this method would allow for a more thorough examination of analysis, and emergence of many observations that would not be forseen were one to have developed a set on analytic categories. A set of general criteria were drawn and the material was judged with reference to these criteria.

A justification for the use of such an approach to evaluation of materials is detailed in a report done by Decore, Carney and Urion (1981:9-11). This research concerned itself with the portrayal of native people of Canada in the Social Studies curriculum materials used in the Alberta schools. These reviewers utilized this approach and have commented that they considered it more realistic, and holistic than other approaches, e.g. those of cited numerical expression, since in this approach the researcher not only cites the instance of the inadequacies, but the reviewer can also judge the material with reference to a set criteria, and can record either specific examples as evidence of the judgement , or summarize the particular inadequacy with illustrations given from the text reviewed.

In the content analysis of the readers two main categories for analysis were stated. They should be interpreted in the light of the discussions in Chapter II through Chapter V of this thesis. These two main categories were:

1. The problems encountered in the use of the reading textbooks which arise from the multilingual or linguistic nature of the children. Under this category the five reading textbooks were reviewed in detail. Each reader and their accompanying guidebook was examined under the light of its appropriateness and relevance in teaching reading in English to little children whose first language is not English. Points considered under this category were those of pedagogical concerns.
2. The problems of cultural nature arising from using these reading textbooks. Under this category each reader was thoroughly reviewed as to its relevance to the culture depicted in the illustrations and content and the actual culture of the Belizean child. Points of importance cited, discussed and summarized dealt with the culture displayed in the family, the dress of characters, games children, values depicted, and the way of life of the characters portrayed in the readers.

C. The Teachers' Questionnaire

A sample of a hundred Belizean teachers were interviewed to fill out an open-ended questionnare (copy in Appendix). Interviews were held in the Belize Teachers' Training College,and eight primary schools. The town schools were the Belmopan Infant School, and the Holy Redeemer Infant School. The village schools in which teachers' data was sought were the San Joaquin School, the Tea Kettle School, Camalote School, and the primary schools in Roaring Creek both the Catholic school, and the Nazarene school. In the towns and villages 45 questionnaires were distributed of which 34 were returned.

At the Belize Teachers' Training College the researcher met with approximately 80 Infant Teachers. She explained information sought after and 80 questionnaires were distributed. Seventy-one questionnaires were returned, of which 5 could not be used as these were barely filled out. Therefore we ended with 66 questionnaires from the Teachers' College, and teachers who are in some level of training. These 66 samples seem to represent a reasonable sample, since these teachers are recruited from all over the country, and they would represent different ethnic groups, religious backgrounds, and different schools. The samples of the teachers interviewed on the field seem also to represent a reasonable sample needed for the survey, as schools representing different denominations and ethnic groups were included.

The teachers questionnaire consists of 11 items. The general information section carries items 1 to 7. Items 8, 9, 10, and 11 deal with open-ended information each carrying questions and statements for the teachers to respond to. The statements were set out probing a number of different response-areas of aspects dealing with the prescribed readers used for beginning reading in Belize.

Item 10 asks teachers if they forsee any abstacles arising from the church, parents, teachers, and Ministry of Education, against the idea of introducing textbooks for reading in Infant I. Item 11 invited teachers to offer comments or suggestions to personnel employed in selecting and preparing reading materials for use in Infant I Schools in Belize.

VII. THE CONTENT ANALYSIS OF THE READERS

A. Introduction

Infant readers in general use in Belize were examined. Initially a kind of content analysis was proposed as a way of eliciting a more or less objective evaluatioin of the readers. A straightforward quantification of elements within the readers, however, seemed not to speak to the issues at hand in Belize.

It was anticipated that this study might point the way to some remediation. In addition, a major premise of the study included consideration of the social reality of Belize--namely, its history as a colony. Another complication was that, if one were to limit the content analysis to quantification of elements, the kind of interpretation of results that one would have to make would have to include reference to all ethnic groups and all cultural systems in Belize. Not all research questions would be appropriate to all texts and all cultural groups.

A similar issue was faced by Decore, Carney and Urion (1981) in a curriculum evaluation in Alberta, where general and disparate research questions motivated a general address to separate titles within the body of examined materials. Instead of naming specific axes for evaluation, general questions were stated initially, and then each text was examined in detail, in a discursive documentation. In this way, omissions in treatment can be dealt with, instead of limiting evaluation to what is explicit in a text. The social context for the use of the text is the constant and primary evaluative domain.

This study follows the same approach. The two general questions addressed to each of the texts were (1) does the curriculum material used for reading in Infant Level I in Belizean schools reflect the multilingual nature of the pupils attending these schools; and (2) do the curriculum materials prescribed by the church or state, and used for reading in Infant Level I in Belizean schools reflect the cultures of Belizean society?

B. English Language Textbooks in a Multilingual Society

Some basic questions must be asked of the infant-level textbooks as introductions to the reading process. The general question is "do the curriculum materials used for reading in Infant I in Belizean schools reflect the multilingual nature of the pupil population attending these schools?" More explicit questions are these:

1. Is the curriculum material based on the principles of teaching English as a second language? And are the following important principles taken into consideration in the textbooks?
    a. the sound system of the specific language spoken by the child
    b. the contrastive analysis of English with Creole, Garifuna, Spanish, Maya and Ketchi

    c. the method of teaching reading adopted by the textbook (phonetic sound of words, sight reading, memorization, conversational English, and so forth)
    d. intonation pattern of the child's language; gestures, idiomatic expressions in the child's native language

2. Following those considerations, do the methods employed to teach reading, by following the teacher's guide to the readers, reflect the best transition from the child's primary language to the English language?

As has been documented in the previous chapter, Caribbean educators stress the need for children to be taught reading from the angle of English as a second language. Carrington (1974), speaking in the same vein about Trinidad's diverse linguistic heritage, has pointed out that the continued use of a curriculum which is incompatable with such a linguistic heritage suggests that at an official level there has never been any serious attempt to respond to the adverse criticisms of official commissioners by designing a syllabus which would allow children to acquire the official language with a minimum of difficulty. He goes on saying that the language arts syllabus in Trinidad and Tobago makes the erroneous assumption that the mother tongue of the learner is English, and that for all pratical purposes the population has been treated as if it were English speaking. This holds true for Belize as well. The planners of language arts programs in Belize, though they realize that it is not so for most of the children, seem to make curriculum choices based on the assumption that the Belizean child's first language is English.

An example of the consequences of the failure to take the child's language into account may be had by looking at some of the problems a Spanish-speaking child encounters in respect to language structure, when text materials are presented in English.

With monolingual English-speaking subjects, studies have shown that beginning reading achievement is related in part to the reader's skill in auditory discrimination; that is, the ability to distinguish between similar sounding words such as "pen" and "pin", or "sun" and "Sam" (e.g., Wepman 1960, Marzano 1976). However the auditory discrimination problems of Spanish-speaking children who speak little English or none at all are less well understood. Although the phonological systems of English and Spanish differ, few research studies have been done to investigate how these differences might be related to auditory discrimination in beginning reading problems.

Spanish-speaking children can be expected to experience auditory discrimination problems because of their language-different background. Although there are similarities in the sound systems of Spanish and English, the phonological differences between the two may lead the Spanish speaker to misinterpret unfamiliar English sounds. Some of these potentially confusing sounds, for example, have been identified in a study done by Kramer and Shell (1979). In their research they ranked 18 pairs of sound contrasts (e.g., "n"/"ng") in order of difficulty. They showed that contrasts such as "v"/"b", "ch"/"sh", "s"/"sp", were very difficult for subjects to discriminate. Such findings are of potential use for educators planning instructional programs in beginning reading for Spanish-speaking children, as well as for teachers planning lessons in English-as-second-language classes.

That study, along with others, shows that Spanish-speaking children have some auditory discrimination problems. Many of these appear to be serious enough to warrant specific attention either prior to or as part of phonics instruction. For example, the allophones of "v" and "sh" are very likely to cause sound confusions. Also the consonant clusters "sp", "st", "ld", and "nd", in final positions, are particularly difficult for Spanish-speaking Mexican Americans to discriminate, since their listening skills based on their native language apparently have not been developed to listen to such clusters at the end of words (Kramer and Shell 1979). When giving phonic instruction in English to Spanish-speaking children, teachers should be aware of the sounds which have been identified, in research and in practical experience, as difficult.

C. The Textbooks and Linguistic Diversity

In this survey it was found that the two readers most commonly used in the Infant I schools in Belize are the *Nelson's West Indian Reader*, Book 1, and *The Basic Cathedral Reader*, Book 1. An examination of all the readers used in school follows here. The focus of this discussion is the classroom reality of the child's use of a language other than English for most of the child's daily life. In some readers or teacher's guides there is an objectification of the scope and sequence of each reader. If that is available, it is the first item for discussion in the description which follows.

Basic Cathedral Reader A: We Look And See

The scope and sequence summary indicates that the first reading program in this series of texts includes the following considerations.

1. The child needs to progress with confidence and success at each stage.
2. The child needs to participate in big muscle activities and have freedom to move about.
3. The child needs to engage in reading activities.
4. The child needs to identify him-/herself with the story situation of the reader.
5. The child needs to experience the satisfaction that comes from being able to read "on his own."
6. The step by step sequence of skills allows pupils to progress at their own rates.

The reading program should (*Guidebook*, p.18)

1. maintain desirable attitudes for learning;
2. provide experiences with good literature;
3. promote growth in skills for word perception; and
4. utilize pre-primer materials.

The reader itself was designed for children in the U.S.A. The lesson materials, stories, and so forth, were put together with the ordinary American child in mind, whose first language is English. Yet these readers have been used for at least 30 years in the Belizean Catholic Schools. Most of our Catholic Schools are run by American nuns and priests. Until recently the manager of all 115 Catholic primary schools was a Jesuit Catholic priest, an American. Of the 115 schools, 84 are found in rural areas. Most of these schools in rural areas are still using the Basic Cathedral Readers. These readers include a manual or guidebook for the teacher. The program for beginning reading assumes that the child has completed the reading readiness activities in the pre-primer *Before We Read*. In this reader, activities related to developing skills in interpreting picture-stories are done with the child. Because of the financial situation and the problems of ordering these books from the U.S., many schools cannot take advantage of these pre-reading activities offered in *Before We Read*. Belizean teachers try to do these activities orally, yet we note that many of the activities are done in English, not in the child's native language. This procedure does not use the child's oral language ability. It does not use the child's thinking capacities, but instead allows for reciting what the teacher says. Neither does it allow the child to engage in meaningful language and language-related experiences, as many of the pictures presented are not related to the child's actual life experiences.

Many of the pictures offered in this first reader seem unrelated to the ordinary Belizean child's experience, for example "Judy" playing with her roller skates. Another common experience which takes place in classrooms for infants is exemplified in activities using the reader in interpreting pictures. Typically, the teacher says "'This is a boy,' repeat 'this is a boy'." The class repeats together "this is a boy." This activity is repeated again and again. For many children "this is a boy" has no meaning, especially if the children cannot speak English. Therefore many will not know what the teacher is saying. If the child is fortunate the teacher will be able to interpret this phrase in his own language. If not, the teacher keeps repeating and repeating "this is a boy", until finally the child guesses or comes to understand that "boy" means "muchacho" or "chol", or whatever this word means in his language. This process becomes very boring to the child and the teacher, and all the joy of interpreting the story is gone.

In the guidebook to accompany the first reader, *We Look and See*, certain basic points related to the process or reading are stressed. Some of these points are

1. "The readers' reaction determines to a large extent the degree to which the child integrates with past experiences the ideas acquired through reading" (p.13). It further stresses that the integration of new knowledge with past experiences is a vital aspect of the reading process. Yet are Belizean teachers aware that the content and pictures presented to the child in these readers do not coincide with the child's everyday experiences?
2. "The ability to use and understand oral language indicates readiness for interpreting printed language" (p.15). If the guidebook here is referring to the English language (which it surely does) then most Belizean children are not ready to begin reading in English the first year of schooling. How can a Belizean child "have made these words [words used in *Before We Read*] a part of his oral language" when the child's everyday home language is not English. Later the guidebook states, "In fact their oral language vocabulary goes considerably beyond the level of the printed language they will encounter in the book." Catholic infant teachers who are expected to follow the guidebook very religiously may come to believe, or pretend, that the above statement is true, and may believe or make believe that the child's first language is English, and thus follow the guidebook religiously.
3. "The child can interpret what he reads only if he can

asociate meaningful oral language with the printed word he sees," (p.17). How can a child associate printed and oral language when the oral and printed language differ? In this situation the printed language is English while the oral language may be Creole, Spanish, Garifuna, Maya or Ketchi. It appears that many Catholic principals or infant schools in Belize have never really examined the guidebooks, nor have they tried to point out to the teachers the pedagogical implications of following the guidebooks to the letter.

The Curriculum Guide to Language Arts points out the ingrained habits of one's native language, of making certain sounds or of placing sounds in certain positions, often cause serious conflict or interference with the learning of a new language. Although similar sounds may exist in English as in the child's native language, these sounds may be found in different contexts in a word. The sound system in Ketchi, for example, may operate in a different way from that of English. The patterns of stress which convey meaning operate quite differently in English than in the languages Belizean children bring to school.

In examining the sound structure in teaching reading in a multilingual situation, we discover that the first reader in this series of Basic Cathedral Readers teaches the vocabulary of 17 words, through the "look and say" method. The Guidebook states, "when the child first begins to read he becomes familiar with symbols for words that are already in his speaking-meaning vocabulary, by having the words presented to him as wholes in meaningful context. Words learned this way are usually referred to as sight words" (p.35). The guidebook here acknowledges that the look and say method, or the sight reading method, is used. Therefore, one assumes that using sound system of letters for word-attack is not used at this stage, if one were to follow the guidebook. This method may be quite successful for children whose first language is English, but for learners of a second language, sight words may be--probably are--meaningless, especially if the word is not wholly understood by the child, and if it does not constitute a part of his vocabulary. In this method the printed word is memorized by the child, and the ability to read will depend upon the ability to memorize and recognize visually the shape of the printed word. Such a method deprives the child of meaningful contexts for words which are read, and disregards the sound system of the child's primary language.

The ability to read and to recognize words in the Spanish language depends to a great extent upon knowledge of the sound system. Sound to symbol correspondence is much better than in English, and so the phonetic approach is possibly less of a problem for the Spanish speaker beginning to read. A Spanish-speaking child would benefit much in reading if the words could be introduced with reference to letter sounds.

This reader seems to employ words for beginning reading which have sound elements that the Spanish language does not contain, or words that are difficult for Spanish-speaking children to pronounce. In this reader we find words such as "Judy," "John," and "Jean," for names of characters. The "j" is a hard sound for Spanish-speaking children to pronounce, as it is for speakers of Garifuna. The reader uses words which have silent letters, for example, the "e" in "come". This word could not be used if reading were to be taught through the sound system. It has been discovered that Spanish-speaking children will automatically pronounce each letter of a word, even though they have not been taught to read in Spanish.

Also, the "th" sound in words like "the" is not found in the Spanish or Creole languages; and the "nd" consonant cluster in words like "and" is a hard sound to pronounce for Spanish-speaking children.[2]

Nelson's West Indian Reader, Book I

The statement of scope and sequence for this reader is summarized from page 1 of the guidebook for the reader.

1. Aims of reading program:
    a. to help the child discover the key to decode written forms

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[2] Louise Morris (1980) says that the main area in learning English for the "boat" children in the U.K. is the pronunciation, especially final and medial consonants. In Chinese, she further says, change of tone in a word changes the entire meaning of a sentence. This phenomenon may hold true for the intonation patterns of the languages of Belize, though none of them are "tone" languages like Chinese.

b. to convert written symbols into the spoken word

c. to grasp meaning of what is read

2. Aim of *West Indian Reader* specifically:

a. to provide learner with phonetic skills which are necessary to decode written symbols into speech

b. to introduce new sounds in familiar environments

c. to use the idea of the sentence as meaningful context

d. to teach non-phonic words as "sight" words

The Nelson's West Indian Reader seems to be a welcome change especially to those teachers who had been using the Basic Cathedral Readers, and to teachers teaching the Creole population. Many Anglican and Methodist schols had been using these readers before the Ministry of Education decided to begin introducing them into the schools. The teacher's guide to the first reader from the outset claims that a good reading program must help the child discover the key to decode the written forms and thereby discover the sounds the words used. This first aim seems to be a more appropriate mode of beginning reading than a sight method, for little children whose first language is not English. The guide further states that the Nelson's West Indian Reader provides the learner with the phonetic skills which are necessary to decode the written symbols into speech. The authors believe that their material is presented in a new linguistically-oriented fashion in environments that are familiar to the reader, and meaningful to the child. An analysis of the first pages of the book follows.

In looking through this reader we discover that pages 1, 2, and 3 are a collection of pictures (static), arranged in columns of three. Twelve pictures appear on each page. On page 1 we see that there are about four pictures which might be unfamiliar to the Belizean child, or in some instances the child would recognize the picture by a different word than the one intended in the lesson. The child might see "cow" for "ox", "orange" for "lime", be unfamiliar with the concept of "ink" (in a bottle), and see the picture of the desk and chair, and not know that "desk", not "chair", is the word the teacher wants.

The same problem can be found on pages 2 and 3. The manual for this reader states "Infant Book I begins with three pages of pictures, intended to stimulate interest and generate conversation." The children will enjoy looking at the picture and calling out the names of each, but after some time they might become bored, as the pictures are static and seem lifeless. How much conversation can these pictures generate, apart from repeating sentences, especially if the English language is used for the conversation intended to be stimulated. Most items will be identified, but why not use a book that has pictures that are familiar to the children. We cannot run out of the thousands of West Indian items which could be common for the whole of the Caribbean region. The Jamaican child will readily recognize the picture of the goat on page 2, as goats roam over Jamaica in large numbers. The Belizean child might say that this animal is a donkey. According to the guide it is important that all pictures be called by their proper names, since they should be providing a basis for the phonic work later on in the book.

Conversation at this stage is bound to be in the child's native language. Nowhere does the guidebook relate to this reality of the Belizean setting. The multilingual nature of the society does not seem to exist, according to the instructions stated in the guidebook for these readers. At this initial stage, recognition of initial sounds and medial vowel sounds should be of vital importance. Consonants and initial sounds of words in the child's primary language should be a part of the language arts program; yet the manual does not make note of this. According to the manual, on page 3, the teacher is supposed to say "listen to these sounds:" (and use the "short" vowel sounds corresponding to the intial sounds of "orange" and "egg"). "Now which of these do you hear in the word 'dog'?" How can a child be able to discriminate the sound if this sound does not exist in his first language? The recognition of sounds of letters in the child's primary language seems of primary importance here, before testing the child on foreign sounds.

By the time the child reaches pages 4 to 7, he should, according to the instructions in the teacher's guide, be able to know the five short vowel sounds and recognize them in initial and medial positions *in English*. This will be a long process, especially when the child's initial language is not English. The Guide does not seem to take this into consideration. The guide for teachers does not recommend or suggest extra activities, oral activities which a child learning a second language is bound to need, before he can move to learning English letter-symbols. The guide does not mention any activities in audial discrimination, which a child learning a second language must practise.

On page 9, there is an exercise asking for discrimination between pairs of words such as "it" and "bit"; "at" and "pat"; and "up" and "cup." This exercise is good for the second-language-learning child. When a new combination is successfully accomplished, the pupils feel a sense of achievement. This exercise helps the child to make new words by decoding and adding new letters. Unfortunately, we find just this one page for such practise. For little children learning a new language, and English at that, a couple more pages of combining their own words from letters already learnt would be an advantage.

From page 10 to the end of the reader, new words are introduced at a rather quick pace. Pages 15 to 26 have new words on each page, with words appearing once, twice, and on some occasions even three times.

Most, if not all of these words introduced on these pages (pp.10-30), cannot be decoded according to the rule taught to the child in the initial reading program, e.g., "monkey," "itself," "leaf," "handle," "let's," "play," "have," and "hard." These pages depict a story of two children. The story does not give their names, which seems awkward. These pages yet are very colourful, occupying whole pages, and are attractive to the young child.

In conclusion it might be said that this reader attempts at the outset to teach reading to the young child by discovering the key to decode written forms, but it does this at a rapid pace not suited for a child learning a second language. The guide for teachers seems to imply that the child's first language is English.

Some points to note in conclusion are

1. that there is no acknowledgement that the child's first language might not be English;
2. that no activities nor exercises emphasize address to the sound system of language, or to a contrastive analysis between English and any of the native languages spoken in Belize;
3. that there is a continued assumption throughout that English is the child's first language; and
4. that the nine-page guide is too short; that Catholic teachers switching to this reader may encounter problems, as the guide for teachers which they have been used to gives detailed page-by-page instructions to guide each lesson.

A Duck Is A Duck, Ginn and Company

The scope and sequence for this reader is introduced in the teachers guide (pp.T8-T9) with the statement "Reading 720 is a broad based program." The subsequent discussion may be summarized as follows.

1. It recognizes that reading is *decoding*. With Reading 720 (the name given the method implied in this series) the child will gradually develop a variety of methods for attacking unfamiliar words. Decoding skills are carefully built.
2. *Vocabulary*. Word recognition, new vocabulary words for each lesson, accompany lesson plans.
3. *Study skills*. Direction forms and recognizing letter forms in alphabetical order.
4. *Language*. Language experience stories; discussion, games, etc.
5. *Creativity*. Elaborating stories in reader, acting, pantomime, etc.
6. *Comprehension*. Sequence of learning activities, recognizing sentence meaning, main ideas, recalling sequences, etc.

This book is used exclusively by the elite private school in Belize City, which is administered by the Mercy Sisters, an American Catholic religious congregation. The parents of children pay high fees for their children to attend this school. Parents are required to buy all the prescribed books for reading. Most of the personnel of the school are American nuns or lay American people. Very few local teachers are hired, and consequently all the textbooks used in this school are purchased in the U.S.A. The reader to be analyzed is published by Ginn Company Reading, and is called the 720 Kit. It provides an extra amount of instructional material to go along with each stage of reading.

The Belizean children attending this school are of mixed ethnic backgrounds. As a school for the elite, it is this school to which upper-class Belizeans send their children. The few English families remaining after the colonial period of course send their children to this school. The British Garrison Army personnel stationed in Belize also bring their children every morning to this school by special bus. In spite of this we find that over half of the children are Creole, speaking the Creole language. White children in this program would comprise about 25% of the school population, and the rest of the children would be Spanish-speaking for the most part. These latter children would likely have learnt to communicate very well in Creole as well. Most of the ethnic Creole youngsters belong to pretty well-to-do families, and therefore are in the upper-status part of the continuum of varieties of Creole language patterns. The Negro Creole child is seldom seen attending this school. This background must be kept in mind in a review of this reader.

This 79-page Infant I reader is a paperback edition, eight by six inches. The cover is beautifully designed on a very bright orange-red background, with the picture of a white duck in a pond. The duck, especially a duckling, is a favourite animal among our four to five year olds. This colourful edition appeals to children. The authors must be commended for bringing colour like magic in this series, using it to very great advantage. The stories depicted in this reader are set against artistic backgrounds, with the printed words catching one's eye very easily. Most pictures have colourful borders or designs around them. At times the printed words are set on colourful placards, and again at other times the pictures or words seem to be count out and pasted on the page, a very effective way for the child to concentrate on the word, or on an important message in the reader. At other times the pictures seem to be drawn and coloured the way little children colour their pictures--very appealing indeed. Another outstanding feature of this series is the way most pictures portray action. The characters are always involved in acting or playing, the way most four to five year old children behave. This infant reader then appears to be an appropriate choice.

Do these readers meet the needs of the children from backgrounds other than English?

For a fact we know that these readers were designed with American youngsters in mind. The English-speaking children in this school are in the minority, and it seems that this book is addressed to them, the few English-speaking white families in Belize City.

It was noted in the overview of scope and sequence that this book recognizes that reading is decoding, that reading involves comprehending the author, critical evaluation, and using data. In examining the teacher's edition, we note that no recognition seems to be given to the children who need more time in comprehending and evaluating what they read. Page 10, on "Program Components," states "Beginning reading experiences introduces children to 38 basic words in meaningful context." The thing to note here is the number of words and the claim that they are introduced in a meaningful context. To introduce 38 English words to children who first have to learn the standard form of the language seems too presumptuous, especially if this has to be done in less than a year. In this series there is another book which the Infant I Class has to master before the end of the school year, called *See the Helicopter*.

Consider the term "meaningful context." For the context to become meaningful to Creole or Spanish-speaking children attending this school, the child needs more time in understanding the lesson than that prescribed in the teacher's edition, and English has to be approached from the perspective of second language instruction. The guidebook does not contain suggestions to practise this method. Teachers through their own initiative have to help the child acquire the context meaningful for interpretation of the text's material, first and foremost in the child's own language, and then in standard English. Some children may learn to read, or cover the three readers in this series prescribed in this program, but may be completely unaware of the meaning of what they read.

The teacher's edition claims that the decoding of words "is done by instruction in both phonemic and structural analysis" (p.12). "Phonemic analysis," according to the manual, is analysis of sounds and symbols, the recognition of sound and related written symbols proceeding from familiar to new.

A recognition of the sounds found in the child's own language might be more helpful before sounds and symbols of another language are taught. The child might then be in a better position to begin reading. Could this practise be introduced at this school? What might be the implications of introducing such a method in teaching reading at this school? Would the parents object to having the child learn the written sound and symbols of the Creole language?

The teacher's edition states "The child becomes aware of word regularities by learning to recognize graphemic bases, spelling patterns, prefixes and suffixes of the language." It is worth noting that the syntax of the Creole language is not that of standard English, and the grammatical categories and practises of one cannot be transferred directly to the other. The Creole language does not use inflectional suffixes common to standard English.

Reading at this early stage should be related to the child's primary language, and to actual experiences of the child.

Tip, Houghton Mifflin Corporation

There is no discussion of scope and sequence for this reader.

The cover design is green with a picture of Tip (the tricky dog) running away with a puppet. This will appeal to the young child--he loves animals and will be eager to find out what the dog is up to.

In the introduction to the guidebook it is stated that the typical English-speaking child comes to school with a sizable vocabulary of words, that he understands when he hears them spoken. This comment certainly will not hold for our Belizean children who are using this reader. Such comments in the guide may influence the teacher of our children into believing that our children can understand spoken English, completely disregarding the child's native language experiences, and the fact that the sound system of English is different than his ethnic language.

Word attack technique.--The teacher's edition for this reader claims to have an adequate program for teaching the child to unlock strange words. For a bilingual or trilingual child, learning to read in this way might be a useful program. In this approach instruction in letter-sound associations is a useful technique. The Spanish, and possibly the Garifuna languages lend themselves to such techniques for learning to read, since they are phonetic-based syllabic languages. For children learning a new language, and learning to read in this new language, much practise in applying the word-attack technique professed in this guide seems adequate. The reader *Tip* has three sets of exercises, comprising two pages each, where practise for mastery of letter-sound association is taught.[3]

It must be pointed out that these six pages are all the exercises based on the word-attack technique through the sound system. These six pages do not supply the child with enough exercises in this technique, especially for a child learning English as a second language. Also practice in oral exercises of phonetic sounds of the consonant letters should be included in the program, and knowledge of sounds and letters to unlock strange words is necessary. For a child whose language is not English, knowledge of sounds of letters in his language would be an asset, before switching to English.

What method is used to teach reading in this reader? In examining the guidebook and the reader it appears that the overall method employed for teaching reading is the "look and say" method, even though the teacher's edition claims that children will learn to read both ways. Of the 64 pages which this reader has there are only six pages dedicated to practising letter-sound associations. The rest of the reader introduces words using the sight-reading approach. In addition it has words which cannot be ciphered out through sound techniques, for example "here" (introduced on page 4 and used 49 times); "come" (introduced on page 7 and used 40 times); and "home" (introduced on page 24 and used 24 times). "The" and "with" are two words using the "th" sound. This sound is very difficult for non-speakers of English to pronounce. In teaching English as a second language much time has to be spent with this sound. The guidebook for teacher's use of course makes no mention of introducing this sound, since it is assumed that all children who use the book are speakers of English.

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[3] Pages 10 and 11 have the letters p, j, n, w, r, t, and l; pages 20 and 21 have m, g, d, f, t, h, t, c, t; and pages 30 and 31 have g, l, p, y, f b, q, n.

Lucky Dip, Sunstart, Ladybird Series

There is no statement of scope and sequence for this text. The make of the book is seven inches by four and a half inches; it is a small hard-covered book, easy to carry and convenient to handle. Children seem to enjoy handling this book.

The cover design is bright and colourful, a picture of a coloured man, with two children (a boy and a girl, also Negro), dipping into a tub for grab-bag. There are some houses and people in the background. The general cover of the book is yellow. There are 34 words used in this reader, and the average repetition of a word is eight times.

The printing used for reading is simple, straight printing. This might be hard for children beginning reading on writing to copy. The reading letters should be consistent with the writing program (e.g., tails on "y", "g", "t" and "a" should be consistent between writing and printing).

The schools that use this book are a few of the Weslyan schools, Anglican schools, and government schools, where it is a supplementary resource.

The Ladybird Sunstart reading scheme consists of six books. The publishers claim that educational experts from five Caribbean countries have cooperated with the author to design and produce this Ladybird Sunstart Reading Scheme. They further state that their work has been influenced by the widely-accepted body of research, Keywords to Literacy; and by the work of Dr. Dennis Craig of the School of Education, University of the West Indies, who has carried out research in teaching the English language to young children whose natural speech or dialect varies considerably from standard English.

It is now known that the attitude towards learning is vitally important, especially in the early stages of education. A young child coming to school should feel happy and be encouraged to talk freely. In a multilingual situation, this process of "talking freely" in the young child's native tongue becomes more crucial, as the child should be encouraged to talk and should be given every consideration in enhancing this security. This can be accomplished at first by allowing the young child to talk freely in his language. Talking freely, or the conversational period, is a crucial step towards learning to read. Does this Ladybird Reader offer enough opportunities for the young child to engage in conversational activities?

In examining the reader we note that pages 4 and 5, the first pages for the child are set aside to "talk freely" about the picture; and pages 6 and 7 allow for the child to "tell the story," while pages 8 and 9 are again given to "talking about the picture." These six pages are the first pages of the reader and the *only* pages dedicated to allow the young child to talk freely. Is the child supposed to enjoy the option and talk in his own language about these pictures? The guidebook does not state that the conversation can be carried on in the mother tongue of the child.

Pages 4 and 5 are very colourful and depict action in every instance. The scene is a typical scene of a Mayfair; games are being played, children are dancing around the maypole accompanied by a typical West Indian band; children and grownups seem to be enjoying themselves. This certainly will incite the young child to talk freely, if the talk is carried on in the child's first langauge. The authors could have made use of more pages like this one.

Pages 6 and 7 display a story in sequence. The child is asked to relate the story. The pictures depict a family getting into their car and going for a picnic at the beach. Most Belizean children living in Belize Town, Corozal Town and Punta Gorda town will certainly be familiar with such a trip, even though most of them would walk to the beach. The children will be eager to relate their own experiences, but can the teacher allow the young child to relate his experiences in the child's primary language? Much of the success in conversational periods at this stage will depend on the mode of language used for conversation.

Pages 8 and 9 are a series of 16 static pictures. Even though at the outset the authors contend that the words and pictures are adapted for tropical countries, some of the pictures might be unfamiliar. Pages 10 and 11 are dedicated to learning the colours, yellow, green, blue and red. Pages 12 and 13 are exercises for visual discrimination, finding another picture like the one given. It is suggested that more exercises resembling this one could have been included.

From page 14 to the end of the reader actual reading begins. The reading is introduced by three new words from the outset. For the multilingual situation more practice with exercises given on pages 4 to 13 would be necessary. Another factor noticed in these pages is that new words are introduced too quickly; instead of giving practise with new words introduced, other new words are thrown at the child. A child learning English as a second language must proceed at a much slower pace than the pace at which this book assumes that children can learn to read. For children whose first language is English there would seem to be little problem.

The general method applied for learning to read according to this reader seems to be the "look and say" method. In reviewing this reader it appears that the series used for children whose first language is English was taken and the characters were changed to Coloured people, with the inclusion of some tropical scene, etc. The mode and method for teaching reading has remained basically the same as that used in the original series. That the authors bothered to mention McNally and Craig, researchers in the teaching of English as a second language, seems to have no consequences in the material, when they are examined for implications of methods for teaching reading.

D. The Texts and Belizean Culture

Introduction

An important element in these readers, especially the Basic Cathedral Readers and McKee Readers, is the failure to present the characters as full human beings with real emotions as well as intellects, experiencing real, identifiable conflict situations. In these books for beginning reading, the characters seem doll figures facing trite situations (e.g., getting a bed and dish for Tip the dog), displaying no feelings and behaving as model children. The mood is blissful and the stories characterize behaviours in accordance with middle-class White standards. The illustrations show clean, well-dressed and smiling children, living together with stereotyped, smiling, helpful parents in a world which appears unreal in Belize. It is an unreal world of absolute social and cultural homogeneity.

The characters in these two readers are all white members of the two-parent, rural or suburban, upper-middle class nuclear family. This stereotype does not reflect the actual socio-economic status of our Belizean children.

Socialization is a process whereby an infant develops a set of attitudes and values, likes and dislikes, goals, purposes, and concept of self. This image of self is arrived at through a gradual, complicated process which continues throughout life (Mead 1934). The process of socialization and consequently the formation of self concept takes place largely thorugh the learning of a role, which for the individual is the set of behaviours appropriate to one's rank or position within a group.

Most readers used in Belize for beginning reading seem to point to racial stereotyping as a factor which can perpetuate a negative self image for Coloured Creoles and all other ethnic groups. The dominance of White middle class values and physical appearances is outstanding in most readers. The existence of racism in textbooks has been documented by Banks (196X), Nharrick (1965) and others. Several researchers have shown that school textbooks affect the racial concepts of children (e.g., Landes [1965]). The social values presented in these readers are consciously or unconsciously transmitted to the child and it may be a powerful message which may condition a child's behaviour, mold his/her self image, teach a value system with more consistency and certainty than any other element present in the reader.

Each of the readers was evaluated for its acceptability in the cultural context specific to Belize. The general question for the evaluation was "do the curriculum materials prescribed by the church or state, and used for reading in Infant I in Belizean schools, reflect the cultures of Belizean society?" Each reader was evaluated with respect to the specific areas noted here.

1. family structures
2. games children play
3. dress
4. occupation of adults
5. housing
6. values implied by reader.

Ladybird Sunstart--Lucky Dip

General Evaluation

The book is quite colorful; children of this age love colours, and the book seems quite attractive because of this. Most of the characters portrayed in the story are Coloured people, which is initially refreshing to see, and a change from the other readers which usually portray an all-White cast of characters. The Creole-Belizean child who is concentrated mostly in the Belize district can readily identify with these characters. Yet we have hundreds of other Belizean children attending schools in Belize who are not of Negro descent; can these children identify with the children and people depicted in these pictures?

On closer scrutiny, this reader leaves much to be desired. It appears that the characters were simply changed from White to Negro people, people who appear well scrubbed and who live in the same suburban environment. James Banks(1969),in his essay "The Need for Positive Racial Attitude in Textbooks", states clearly the direction which textbooks must take if they are to deal adequately with this racial problem. He says:

> Coloring white characters brown or perpetuating a sterile middle class image of the Negro, will not meet the criteria of objective treatment of the Negro because such images are inconsistent with reality.

Family structures

The family structure portrayed in this book is the nuclear family: father, mother, brother, sister. Thier life experiences, their activities at home and away from home depict a well to do middle class White family, rich according to Belizean standards. They always seem to be having a good time, happy and contented. For example, on pages 6 and 7 we see this family going off for a picnic at the beach, playing together in the sea. This activity seems rare in Belize. People from Belize City do go for picnics by the beach, but it is usually an extended family affair. Uncles, aunts, cousins and neighbors join together and to have a good time. The Creole-speaking Belizean usually lives in this sort of an extended family arrangement, related families living together in the same "yard". "Family" here means all the people living in the yard or neighborhood, who for the most part would be related.

Games children play

Most of the games played by the youngsters in this book are quite familiar to most Belizean youngsters, for example they do participate in playing the game "pinning the donkey's tail", and playing the games depicted on pages 5 and 6. Children who live by the sea do play on the sand, and also children of this age love to climb trees, as shown on pages 29 and 31. On the whole the games played by the characters in this text do portray similar games our children play. Yet it is worth noting that most of these games are played in Belize together with many more children than what is represented in the book.

Dress

As illustrated in the textbook most if not all the characters shown seem well-dressed according to Belizean standards of dressing for such events. For example on pages 6 and 7 a Mayfair seems to be in progress. We find that some gentlemen are dressed in coat and tie. At this time of the year (May) the weather in Belize is very hot and most men do not dress in coat and tie. Such an attire would be used only when people get married (and many borrow the suit for the occasion), or when participating in a funeral.

Occupation of adults

In this Infant I reader adults are shown only on pages 6, 7, 8 and 9. Adults appear playing in a band, selling things, or conducting games; activities most adults do even in Belize. On pages 8 and 9 the ideal father and mother are depicted, taking the children to the beach and playing with them on the beach. This portrayal of an ostentatiously-devoted father and mother seems unrealistic in the ordinary way of life of most people in Belize.

Housing

Pages 7, 9, 21, 13, 25, 35, 39 and 49 portray the types of houses and their interior set-up. Most of the pictures shown do not portray the true nature of the living accomodations of the majority of people. For our people in the city of Belize many live in over-crowded conditions, shacks. There are a few single well-built houses but they are in the minority.

Values of life

These values must be defined clearly. The values held in different cultures represented in Belize may differ. A clash may occur in the values cherished in Belize, and those values be indirectly transmitted in this reader. For example, Belizean people for the most part seem to have large families. Women have as many children as nature can allow. Indirectly the text seems to want to portray that having a small, closely-knit family is best for happy living. Belizean people seem to love and enjoy living with many people. This is more outstanding in the Creole extended family, where one's cousin is considered to be one's sister, and so forth. This text, even though it can be commended for its many desirable points when looking at the cultural aspect, fails to portray one of the basic values of Belizean life, that of sharing the good times and good things with as many people as you can.

McKee Reader, Tip And Mitten

The story in this reader centres around a dog named Tip and a cat named Mitten. Little children at this age love animals. In this sense this book will appeal to the young child. In the story, what puzzles Susan and Peter is how to get a bed for Tip to sleep on and a dish for Tip to eat from. Finally Father and Mother take the children to a store where the children buy a bed and a dish for the dog. This whole procedure will seem unrealistic to the Belizean child, who knows that dogs eat and sleep anywhere. Besides, there is no pet shop in Belize.

Family structure

The characters portrayed in this reader are a typical American middle-class nuclear family. Father, Mother, brother Peter, and sister Susan, plus their cat and dog. They all depict a happy family; when Father comes home from the office (with briefcase, coat and tie) he drives the family to the pet store to buy a bed for Tip to sleep on, and a dish for Tip to eat from.

Games children play

No games seem to take place. The story centres around Peter's and Susan's concern over their pet dog Tip, who has no bed nor dish. Mitten the cat is delivered by the postman, in the story; something unheard of in Belize. Many villages have no postman; pets are not delivered by postmen anywhere in Belize. Not many children have pets. Dogs are watch dogs, or help hunt in the bush, and cats are there for catching mice.

Occupation of adults

Adults are depicted on pages 12, 13, 14. On these pages we see Father coming home from his office job with his briefcase. He is dressed with coat and tie, which seems to imply that he holds a professional job. Comparing him to the average parent in Belize, we could say that this is a false representation of the occupation of an ordinary adult or parent. Most parents in Belize seem to fall in the category of labourer. When Father comes home from the milpa or from cutting cane he is usually so tired and does not worry or spend time driving his children to stores. There is a great probability that he will not have a car.

Housing

Peter and Susan seem to live in a beautiful house with an upstairs, as can be seen on pages 2 and 21. The house appears to be a big, comfortable, middle-class house, with a big yard and trees, where these two priveleged children play. All the furniture and equipment in the house are typical of a well-to-do family according to Belizean standards. Most of our children do not live in such conditions.

Values implied by the reader

Can certain values by transmitted to the child in using this book? As stated above, this book was intended for a typical middle-class American child. In it are portrayed the way of life of these people. When a little child sees the book and later learns to read it, he may develop a desire to be as the characters are in the book, to be as rich as the children in the pages seem to be. He may want to be White, and have pets. He may even come to despise his way of life and the values of his culture.

Basic Cathedral Reader, We Look And See

This book is used in almost all Catholic schools. It is 8 inches by 6 inches, paperback, and has 48 pages. The cover is pale yellow, with a brown border, and has a picture of John with a bone behind his back, and Spot the dog looking up at him.

This pre-primer reader has been used for many years in the Catholic schools in Belize. Because they are printed and published in the U.S.A., schools have had to put in their order the year before they are required. When these books arrive (at times, after the school year has started) they are very expensive to buy, as the parent has to pay for customs duty and handling, plus the exchange for the high value of the American dollar. But Catholic managers, principals and teachers seem to have no mercy, and they compel the parents to buy these books for their children. The young child, especially in the rural areas where many families live a subsistence state of life, has never owned an article of value as his own personal possession. This book, the first reader, becomes the first possession for many children, and he, for the most part, will hold it dear and cherish it. Does this alien book depicting other peoples' way of life deserve such esteem in an ordinary Belizean household?

Family structure and games children play

The family structure portrayed in these 47 pages depicts a middle-class, nuclear American family. Father, Mother, John, Jean and baby Judy. The stories are divided into three sections. Section One is centred around the children. There is a story dedicated first to Judy, followed by one especially concerned with Jean, and then John and Spot become the heroes. In the first 18 pages, these children play games with each other and their two pets Puff and Spot. The games they play are always in connection with their toys, expensive and beautiful to the Belizean child. For example, page 6 shows Judy with a red wagon, and page 7, Jean, riding her tricycle with her rag doll. These pictures depict the children having a really good time with their pets and toys. Belizean children have toys, but many are home-made. A few of them may own a bicycle or wagon but the majority do not.

Section Two is dedicated to the pranks played by the pet dog, Spot, and the cleverness of the pet cat, Puff; a story on Tim, the teddy-bear, follows. The children seem to enjoy their pets and toys; our Belizean children may wish for such toys and pets.

Section Three has the rest of the stories which portray the general living patterns of home life. Of special interest is the fact that in all Basic Cathedral Readers a story or section is reserved for some religious activity, prayers before meals, prayers before bedtime, or honouring the statue of Jesus or the Blessed Virgin. Fostering desirable religious attitudes through these stories seems to be a vital part of this reading program. The values held and honoured in the middle-class Catholic family seem to be implicitly put forward to the child, even at this early age. It is true that collecting flowers, decorating a Saint, lighting candles, are all part of a young child's life in an ordinary Belizean Catholic family. In school, nevertheless, we may find some children whose parents do not belong to the Catholic faith. Another important factor implicitly brought out in this reader is the sense of belonging to one nuclear family. Warmth and understanding seem to be shared among this family and this may not coincide with the ordinary way of living of our children. A Creole child, for example, may experience warmth and security within a group which is her family, and may wonder what has happened to the rest of the family, the many cousins, aunts, uncles, and friends that the family comprises.

The ethnic identity of characters portrayed are White people: Judy and Jean are yellow-haired, and John, brown-haired. Children using this series may grow up thinking that to be accepted you must be White and have yellow hair. A false sense of identity may also develop. [4] The negative result in using such readers may be that the child may grow up despising his culture and his appearance.

Dress and housing

Judy, Jean and John, the characters portrayed in this reader, seem well dressed, even overdressed, for the different activities they engage in, namely, mostly playing outside. They wear socks and shoes always. Judy and Jean wear beautiful dresses, while John is always in long pants. Many small Belizean boys of John's age wear short pants, though they may have long pants for going to church on Sundays. On pages 11 to 14, John is wearing roller skates. This item is unknown to the average Belizean child. Pages 31 to 40 offer pictures of the home where these children live. They seem to be living in a gorgeous home, having all appliances and conveniences. For example, page 39 shows Judy's bedroom. A small percentage of Belizean boys and girls would have their own rooms. Many of our children sleep in hammocks or on the floor.

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[4] I have known many little children in school who have been asked to draw themselves, and they run around the class looking for a yellow crayon to colour their hair. They have continuously to be encouraged to use black or brown to colour their hair.

The reader seems to convey to the young child a false represenation of ideal culture. The ethnic portrayal is not of himself; the family structure is different that his own; his ordinary dress is not shown in what the characters wear.

Ginn and Company, A Duck Is A Duck

In this edition racial and ethnic groups found in Belize City remain under-represented. Some of the stories could also deal directly with the actual experiences of the Belize City child, and include his problems, rather than just include a brown character in the story.

The content of this colourful reader is divided into three sections. Section One is entitled "The Park". In these 28 pages we encounter three children, Bill, Jill and Ben. They are accompanied by their dog, Lad, and they play at the park. How does this section represent our Belize culture? Children in Belize City do know what a park is, and have often played in one. In this respect it seems to be appropriate, except when we consider that no park in Belize City has the playground facilities, pond, and so forth, which this textbook park represents. In examining the characters we note that they are all White children with the exception of one child. His type is represented in the minority, while actually in Belize, of course, the reverse is true. When Ben becomes afraid to play, it is Jill and Bill who run to his aid. This action of a bigger brother or sister helping a younger member of the household will certainly be appreciated by our own children, who are trained to be responsible for the younger member of the family.

In the section following the above, the same characters act, Jill, Bill, and Ben. Two other children join in the fun in finding a turtle. They are Ted and Nan, a Coloured boy and girl. These children seem to be on their way to school when they find this turtle, so they take it to school and have Miss Hill, the teacher, guess what animal they have found. When she guesses, they all decide to take it to the park, the best home for the turtle. In reviewing this section we note that Belizean children have had similar experiences in finding turtles, and so forth, and if children were on their way to school they would usually take whatever animal they might find to their teacher. In this sense the story presented becomes familiar to the child, and he can identify with what is happening.

All of the characters except Nan and Ted are White. The teacher, Miss Hill, represents a typical young White American woman. Bill and Jill and Ben are White children, but they seem to get along very well with the Negro children. This is worth noticing, and our children are sure to note also. On page 57, Bill and Ben's room is shown. They have their own chest of drawers, books, clock, lamp and other items which many households in Belize cannot afford to buy for the whole family, much less for individual members of the family. The area around the park, where most of the children's activities are seen to take place, appears to be a well-developed beautiful area with plenty of big green trees and grass. The houses look neat and pretty modern with sidewalks and carpeted entrances, for example, on page 30. Such an environment is not really found in Belize City, and children will fail to identify their town with the places in pictures depicted here. The beautiful Caribbean Sea is right beside Belize City. An Infant I reader portraying the sea and activities centered around there would have been more meaningful to our Belizean children, rather than a modern park found in the big cities of the U.S.A.

The last section of the book contains the familiar story of the rabbit and the turtle, a story which children of all ages and races enjoy. If children have mastered the art of reading, they will enjoy this section, which is well illustrated with much colour. The story ends with Little Rabbit wanting to swim, and Little Duck wanting to hop.

Eventually they realize that a duck is a duck and cannot hop, and a rabbit is a rabbit, and cannot swim.

This reader has gone one step ahead from the other readers examined so far, in the inclusion of Coloured or Negro children in the book, yet it still needs much revision and change to meet more appropriately the cultural patterns of the Belizean child.

Nelson's West Indian Readers-Infant Book I

This paperback book is 10 inches by 7 inches and has 30 pages. The cover is orange-bordered with a square picture in the middle. The picture is of an old man giving back a ball to a girl and boy.

Most Anglican and Methodist schools, and a few Catholic schools use this book, because the government is requesting schools to use them. This represents an initial step towards standardizing reading textbooks. It has been noted that a few Catholic schools which have used them have switched back to the Basic Cathedral Readers. Some of the reasons given for this switch were

1. new words are introduced at a rapid pace; the Cathedral readers allow the teacher to spend more time with new words;
2. the lack of a proper guidebook;
3. the book tears rather easily; pages come off, and therefore it cannot be handed down in the family; and
4. many Mestizos do not want to identify with Creole culture.

In reviewing this reader with the cultural aspect in mind, one quickly notes that according to portrayal of ethnic identity, this reader seems suited for the Creole-speaking Belizean, and perhaps the Garifuna groups. All the characters in the book and the stories represent Negro people. The Belize Creole and the Garifuna ethnic group originate from Negro backgrounds and members of both groups are dark-skined with kinky hair. As brought out in the first part of the study, some of the Creole Belizeans have a mixture of White English blood with African blood, while the Garifuna ethnic group claims to be a mixture of Waika Indians with African slaves. Yet the predominant features of most are similar to those depicted in the Nelson's West Indian Readers. In this respect the book seems appropriate in representing the culture of some of our people. But what about the other ethnic groups? Can children in these cultures identify with the pictures of children presented in the reader?

Environment

The first 12 pages of this reader present pictures which for the most part are familiar and can be found in an ordinary West Indian setting. Pages 15 and 30 relate a story of a boy and girl. They are playing the game of batting ball and they accidently bat the ball into an old man's yard. This man's dog picks up the ball for them. Later on they go to play by the beach followed by this dog. On the sea are fishing and sailing boats, a familiar picture for children living along the coast of Belize; most all towns in Belize are coastal except San Ignacio and Orange Walk. Children living in inside villages are not so acquainted with the sea, but have seen it when they go to town. About the only children who would not be familiar with the Caribbean Sea would be Maya and Ketchi children. The games the boy and girl are playing appear quite familiar to most Belizean children, as they all bat ball at home or in school at some time or another.

In conclusion we can say that of all the textbooks used for reading in Infant Level I, this reader seems the closest in meeting the cultural needs of most of our Belizean children. The characters, the games children play, and the environment surrounding the characters can be identified with a Belize setting found in coastal towns and villages.

VIII. THE TEACHERS' QUESTIONNAIRES

A. Introduction

Curriculum materials should be designed to meet the needs of pupils. In the educational field, major research efforts have been devoted to the evaluation of the attainment of curriculum goals. The needs, concerns and priorities of teachers in relation to curriculum materials for use in schools do not seem to be solicited as much as they should be in the deliberations of curriculum planners. Yet lacking such considerations the product of the curriculum development may be deficient. Why? Teachers' views are important for at least two reasons.

1. Because of the intimate knowledge and the experience of the realities of the classroom, teachers may be conceived of as reflecting the needs of the children they teach.
2. Teachers can play a crucial role in the interpretation and implementation of curriculum inovations.

In this study it was felt that the teachers' views and concerns about the curriculum materials being used in schools was an essential part of the review and analysis of the prescribed reading trextbooks. Therefore their views and opinions were sought through means of an open-ended questionnaire. The identification of their concerns and views on the reading textbooks and their suggested priorities regarding future selection of curriculum material in this respect should offer important practical implications to educational planners for Belize. The knowledge of these concerns and priorities in regard to future selection of reading materials could well guide curriculum developers as well as the planning of teacher education. It may also provide a framework for research on teachers' roles in the curriculum enterprise and the relationship between teachers and curriculum developers.

In this chapter the analysis of the teacher questionnaire is presented. In the first section a description of the variables in the general information section is portrayed. This is followed by the analysis and discussion of Items 8, 9, 10 and 11 of the questionnaire, generally in relation to the premises put forward in Chapter I.

B. The General Section

Of the 100 respondents, 75 were female and 25 were male. Approximately half of them were under 25 years of age; and approximately half had less than 5 years of teaching experience. Tables 8-1, 8-2, 8-3, and 8-4 demonstrate the distribution of values for age, teaching experience, level of teacher qualification and ethnic group.

Question 6 in the general information section asked the teachers to name the prescribed reader used in their particular school. This question seemed necessary in order to obtain an idea of the textbooks currently being used for reading in Infant Level I. From the 100 questionnaires analyzed, 98 teachers responded to this question. From the answers given, Table 8-5 was created.

Question 7 in the General Information section asked the teachers if they used a teacher's manual or guidebook to follow the reading lessons. All 100 teachers responded to this question. Forty of the 100 teachers claimed that they used a teacher's guide for reading, while 55 said that they did not have access to a guidebook. The lack of a guidebook is one of the problems teachers encounter in schools. Of the 100 teachers interviewed, 5 were bold enough to admit that they had a guidebook for their readers but did not bother to use it. Yet this appears to be a small proportion compared to the 50% of teachers who appear to have no specific written guidance in using their readers in Infant I.

In interviewing the teachers, they were asked to specify in what denominational school they were teaching. Of the 100 responses, 98 teachers specified the confessional nature of the school in which they had taught or were teaching, and the results are shown in Table 8-6.

C. The Open-Ended Questions

This part of the study presents the summary of responses on the teachers' questionnaires items 8 to 11. On these items teachers were free to express their views and concerns regarding the textbooks which they were using or had used with Infant I children. The responses can be generalized, however, with great clarity, and it was felt that an appropriate way to examine the main responses was to classify them into such generalized categories.

Problems Noted

Item 8, asks the teachers whether or not they have experienced problems with readers, can be divided into three parts, the notation of problems, the kinds of problems, and the reasons for problems.

Problems Noted

This section of Item 8 asks teachers if they have encountered any problems in using the prescribed textbook for reading in Infant I. The answers varied between "yes", "no", and "not sure." Ninety-three teachers responded to this question, and the results are tabulated in Table 8-7. As can be seen from the table, 7 teachers did not bother to specify a response, while 50 teachers felt that they had encountered problems in using the prescribed Infant I reader. Sixteen teachers felt that they were not sure if they had had problems to state, and 27 responded that they had no problems with their readers. One notes from the table that over 50% of those who responded felt that they had had such problems. This finding supports the premise put forward in Chapter I that a significant number (not in the statistical sense) of teachers who responded to the questionnaire would specify that they had encountered problems with the Infant I readers they had used.

Kinds of Problems

In the second section of Item 8 on the questionnaire, it was asked of teachers who had noted that there were problems to name two or three problems which they had encountered. Of the 50 teachers who said that they had encountered problems in using the reader, 41 teachers stated explicit and specific problems. A few mentioned three problems, while most of them mentioned one or two problems.

The problems that these teachers stated varied, and in summarizing them it was discovered that they could be generalized in three main categories

1. problems arising from cultural difference
2. problems arising because of the fact that most children's first language was not English; and
3. general problems of a material nature.

The first two categories had been predicted as the ones most teachers would see as problematic, and that was indeed the case. Those kinds of problems are discussed here, using the teachers' own words as much as possible.

Problems Involving Cultural Difference

The problems the teachers documented are summarized below. After each notation of problem, a number appears in connection with an abbreviated notation of the specific reader which the teacher cited as problematic, and these are included in parentheses.[5] The number beside the symbol indicates the number of times that reader was cited in connection with the specific problem mentioned.

1. Not Belizean culture (WI 2; BC 10)
2. Content of book not Belizean (WI 1; BC 3)
3. Book is foreign (WI 5)
4. Book depicts different environment (i.e., pictures, unfamiliar items, names of children, etc.) (WI 4; BC 10)
5. Some Belizean children have no "West Indian" background (WI 3; BC4; LS 2)
6. Some words have unfamiliar sounds to Belizean children (WI 3; BC 2; LS 2)
7. Stories have no relevance to our children (WI 1; BC 2; LS 2)
8. Books not interesting to our children (WI 1; BC 2).

The above statements were repeated in different forms, but the general theme was there. Nelson's West Indian Reader and the Basic Cathedral Reader were the books mentioned most often. This may be due to the fact that these are the two books being commonly used in schools in Belize. We also note that the problem most commonly mentioned by teachers was that "books depict a different environment."

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[5] WI is West Indian Reader; BC is Basic Cathedral Reader; LS is Ladybird Series.

This problem seems to bother many teachers. Following this response, the next problem which was popularly mentioned was "book is not Belizean culture." Teachers kept mentioning this response over and over in statements such as "the stories are not relevant to our culture," "the books do not relate to children's way of life," "pictures in books are not appropriate," and so forth.

This latter response was mostly aimed at the Basic Cathedral Reader *We Look and See*. There were many occasions where teachers referred directly to the unsuitability of the books in the light of the culture of the Belizean people. From the above description we may conclude that Belizean teachers seem aware and concerned that there is a problem between these foreign readers and the culture of children attending these schools.

A test was made for association between the variables of whether or not a teacher noted a problem in the area of cultural relevance of the reader, on the one hand, and the reader which the teacher had used, on the other. The results of a computation of the chi-square value for this test is shown in Table 8-8. Because of low cell frequencies for the readers, other than for the two main ones used in Belize, everything but the Basic Cathedral and Nelson's West Indian readers were considered to be "other", for purposes of this test.

This test seems to reveal an association between teachers' noting of problems of a cultural nature, and the type of textbook used.

Two other tests of association were made, attempting to find if there was an association between the level of qualification a teacher had attained, and teaching experience, on the one hand, and whether or not a teacher would note problems of a cultural nature, on the other. The results of those tests are shown in Tables 8-9 and 8-10. It can be seen that there is an association between teacher qualification, on the one hand, and teacher's recognition of problems of a cultural nature; while the number of years of teaching experience, measured in terms of this study, does not seem to predict reliably a pattern of response to this issue in clear enough terms to produce a high chi-square value.

Problems Having To Do With Multilingualism

These are expressed, again, in terms as close to the teachers' terms as possible. Again, the incidence of the notation of the problem is shown in parentheses, along with the readers to which it refers.[6] The readers are not individually distinguished by number of noted problems in this case.

1. Language barrier, limited English vocabulary (9-WI, LS, BC)
2. Words in reader are too difficult (11-WI, MR, BC)
3. Too advanced for our children, vocabulary too high (8-MR, WI)
4. Not enough time on pronunciation (4-WI)
5. Too much memory reading (6-WI, LS)
6. Too many new words at beginning, not well suited for beginners (15-WI, LS, BC)
7. Pictures not related to words introduced (4-WI, LS, BC)
8. No phonics given, no sound recognition (9-WI, BC)
9. Repetition insufficient (6-WI, BC)
10. Too many books to cover for one year (4-WI, BC)
11. Too advanced, slow process of learning to read (12-WI, MR)
12. Not graded, too complex (9-WI, MR)

It is worth noting the comment which reads "too many words at the beginning" was mentioned 15 times, and most of these criticisms were directed at the

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[6] WI is West Indian Reader; BC is Basic Cathedral Reader; LS is Ladybird Series; MR is McKee Reader.

Nelson's West Indian Reader. Many of the infant teachers using this book are beginning to realize that new words in this first reader are introduced at a quick pace not suited for our Belizean child, whose first language when he begins school is not English. The teachers note that failure of some of the books currently being used in Belize for teaching reading to beginners is the apparent disregard of the slow process of teaching reading to speakers of a foreign langauge. These books appear to the teacher and child to be too advanced for this complex process. This failure has been brought out by many teachers in the comment in this category, "too advanced for slow process of teaching to read." Another complaint brought out by the teachers is that the words in the readers were too difficult for little children.

Is there an association demonstrable by a chi-square value between the type of reader used and the teacher's naming of problems arising out of the multilingual nature of Belize? Table 8-11 provides the results of such a test for association. The level of significance seems remarkable.

Two other tests of association were made, attempting to find out if there was an association between the level of qualification a teacher had attained, and teaching experience, on the one hand;

and whether or not a teacher would recognize problems having to do with second-language issues and choice of textbooks, on the other. The results of the tests are shown in Tables 8-12 and 8-13. It can be seen from Table 12 that there is an association between teacher qualilfication on the one hand and the teacher's noting second-language problems with the reader. The number of years of teaching experience, however, does not seem to be so strongly associated that it provides a high chi-square value, and does not allow a claim for association.

Finally, the variables of sex, age, and ethnicity might be considered to predict differences in response to a request to identify textbook problems identified with cultural relevance or second-lanague instruction. Tables 8-14, 8-15, and 8-16 show remarkably low chi-square values for those variables' association with notation of problems of cultural difference. Tables 8-17, 8-18, 8-19, show the same lack of association for noting problems related to the multilingual nature of Belize. It may be stated that the tendency for teachers to remark upon these problems, while relatively high in the sample, is fairly evenly distributed across age, sex, and ethnic cohorts--at least to the extent that association of this type may be claimed on the basis of chi-square values. It is interesting to note, however, that the problems which arise out of the multilingual character of the situation of the school does produce a pattern of sorts when ethnicity of teachers is taken into account. The Creole teachers seem to be least concerned to specify problems arising out of the multilingual situation in which they find themselves. The ethnic groups which seemed most concerned about these problems were the Maya and Garifuna groups. The numbers of this sample are too small to make any definitive claim, but in the actual situation in Belize, these groups do seem to display an attachment to their cultural and lingustic bases, in greater measure than the other groups.

Other Problems

These responses cannot be categorized as problems dealing directly with culture, nor problems dealing directly with the multilingual nature of our society, but may fall under the heading of general problems. Under this category the following problems surface:

1. too expensive
2. books not available
3. not enough books for the class
4. pupils have no readers
5. print too small

6. books going out of print.

Most of these problems mentioned referred to the Basic Cathedral Readers, since Government is pushing schools to use the Nelson West Indian Readers. Catholic managers seem reluctant to order new copies of the Basic Cathedral Readers. A result is that because these readers are still being used, teachers encounter some of the problems mentioned above.

Reasons for Problems

Item 8 of the questionnaire asks the teachers to give reasons why they think the above problems occur. Here it was interesting to note that some of the problems stated in Section 2 were repeated by some of the teachers as reasons for the problems. Thirty teachers responded to this question and stated reasons. Many teachers repeated each other in stating the reasons, but among the most crucial the following seem worth noting:

1. English is a foreign langauge
2. Books are printed abroad
3. Nothing is being done by State or Church
4. Books not relevant to environment, different cultures of Belize
5. Children can't discuss; do not speak English
6. No practice or help at home.

It was very pleasing to note that teachers are beginning to realize that one of the crucial reasons for the many problems encountered in using the textbooks for reading is that English is a foreign language to the young child. Once teachers become sensitized to the social and pedagogical problems involved in teaching non-English speaking children, we are on the threshold of discovering a way and a means to solve the problems encountered in using the prescribed textbooks. Many teachers are conscious that these readers are printed abroad, and they are beginning to question the possiblity of trying to obtain our own readers, a healthy approach to the problem. Yet they do become discouraged when the managers of their schools and personnel at the Ministry of Education seem unconcerned about the problems teachers face in the classroom and when they seem so very slow in trying to innovate new ideas and appraoches to do something constructive about the readers. Another crucial block against advancement, the teachers believe, is the fact that many children entering school cannot speak English. How can such a child carry on a conversation or discuss the picture when his langauge is not English. Here the teachers presume that people are aware of the policy in school, where the child is supposed to speak and to discuss in English from the beginning. Some teachers felt that one of the reasons for our problems in using the texts stems from the fact that parents do not help the children at home, and that children do not practise their reading at home. Here two points should be stressed.

Many parents are illiterate; some may be able to read but not in English. For example in Mestizo towns or villages parents may be literate in Spanish. They may have attended a school for some years, but have forgotten how to read and write in English (for example, in the villages in the Northern areas). In a study done in 1979, 116 Belizean teachers were asked if they knew any persons who were taught standard English in school, and who had now forgotten how to speak English. Of the 116 teachers interviewed, 35 stated that they knew a great many persons, and 27 teachers stated that they knew some persons, while 54 teachers stated that they knew a few who had been taught in English but had now forgotten to speak in English. In the Maya and Ketchi communities, and smaller villages around Belize, many parents did not have the opportunity to attend school.

Another important fact to point out is that many Belizean youngsters, once they have seen and studied the pictures in their readers, become bored with the reader. Parents have a hard time trying to make the children of this age read at home. One of the reasons may be that the child can repeat the words in the reader from memory, but does not really understand what he is reading in a number of cases.

Teachers Wanting Change

Item 9 on the questionnaire dealt with the question of change to another textbook. This item can also be divided into three parts. Section One asked the teachers if a change to another textbook would be helpful in combatting the problems they now face in using the prescribed reader. The responses to this question were divided into three compartments, affirmative, negative, and not sure.

There were 71 responses to this question. Of those who responded, 44 (62% of those responding) believed that a change to another textbook would be a good thing. Of all teachers queried, 43% wanted a change; 27% felt that no change was needed; 18% were not sure; and 12% did not respond. It is interesting to note that out of the 16 teachers in the sample who used the Basic Cathedral Readers, 11 wanted their book changed. Compared to that percentage, only 37% of those teachers using the Nelson's West Indian Reader wanted a change to another text.

Section 2 of Item 9 asked the teachers to name changes which they thought would be appropriate to their school, in relation to the readers in use. Those suggestions for change will be discussed with reference to the specific textbook addressed by the teacher.

Nelson's West Indian Reader

Twenty-six teachers responded "yes" to Item 9 in Section 1 of the questionnaire. Yet we find 29 teachers stating suggestions for change in Item 9, Section 2.

These other three teachers, even though they had stated "no" to Section 1 seem to have felt that suggestions should be given.

Of the 29 teachers suggesting change, 16 of them, which is more than half of this group, seemed concerned with the culture of the Belizean child not being portrayed in their readers. The following comments, which have been directly quoted from the responses given, portray this concern.

1. Books do not have enough Caribbean things.
2. Should suit the child's environment.
3. Should be child-centred.
4. Does not relate to our country's way of life (sports, food, etc.).
5. Not relevant to our area.
6. Book does not have things the child sees every day.
7. Let's have a Belizean book.

The other concern which seemed to surface against the West Indian Reader dealt with the actual use and methodology of the lessons found in the reader. Comments like the following were directed to this problem.

1. Book should have more phonics.
2. Should have larger pictures.
3. This book is not well graded.
4. The book does not repeat new words.
5. A better manual should be provided.
6. Should change to an easier book.

7. The child would be glad if his language were used in the book.
8. Change to Basic Cathedral Reader.

Basic Cathedral Reader

Of the 16 teacher who stated that they used the Basic Cathedral Readers, 12 named changes which they thought should be introduced in their school regarding the reader in use. In this section more teachers seemed concerned with the unsuitability of their reader and culture of the child, and statements such as the following were offered by the teachers.

1. Books should be of the Caribbean area.
2. The books should be of the places where child lives.
3. Adopt the stories to Caribbean environment.
4. We need a Carribbean book.
5. A local publication is necessary.
6. Books should relate to the child's environment.
7. Stories could be changed to fit our climate.
8. Reading should bring happiness to little children.
9. Pictures should attract the child.

Other changes which these teachers mentioned referred to the advanced vocabulary these books present to the young child, and a need for books which introduced fewer words at a time. Another change suggested by the teachers in connection with this book was that the cost should be reduced. Other books which were suggested in place of the Basic Cathedral Reader were the Nelson's West Indian

Reader and the Ladybird Series.

Ladybird Series

Among the four teachers claiming to use the Ladybird Series, only one responded to this question. She was a female teacher and less than 25 years old, and she was in training. She was of Garifuna ethnic background and was teaching in a Catholic school. In answering the question, she said that she thought that no change of reader was really needed, but that the words in the book could be a bit simpler; meaning, it is presumed, that the vocabulary of the book seemed beyond the ordinary child's vocabulary in English.

The McKee Readers

Six teachers using the McKee Readers filled out the questionnaire, and all of these 6 teachers responded to Item 9, Section 2, of the questionnaire. Most of the changes which these teachers stated dealt with suggestions for the pedagogical problems arising from using these readers. Some of the comments made were

1. should get a graded series, that starts from the beginning;
2. choose books that can master various ways of attacking basic skills;
3. a simpler reader could take the place of this reader;
4. a reader with more phonic sounds;
5. more pictures to enrich the vocabulary;

6. choose books where children can know something of the characters before introducing reading (and here probably the respondent is referring to a pre-primer as McKee Readers do not include pre-primers);
7. book should meet the level of reading the child is at;
8. pictures should go with the words.

The teachers suggested two other readers they felt were better than the McKee Readers, and they were The Caribbean Readers and Nelson's West Indian Readers.

Reasons for Change

In Item 9, Section 3, respondents were asked why they thought the aforementioned changes would be useful. The method of analyzing this part of the question will follow the same procedure as that used for Item 9, Section 2. Those reasons are detailed below, with respect to the specific text in connection with which they were mentioned.

McKee Readers

All teachers who had filled out questionnaires answered this question. Their answers seemed an extension of their discussion of the ways a new reader would assist in the acquisition of a better academic standing for the students. Among the comments dealing with a more appropriate reader, with respect to the teaching of English as a second language, the respondents said that such a reader would be

1. more relevant to the child;

2. based on things the child is a part of;
3. based more on learning from pictures;
4. designed to allow the teacher to start from the familiar, and provide a better understanding thereby; and
5. designed so that reading would have meaning for the child.

Ladybird Series

Of the 5 teachers who stated that they use this reader, only 1 responded to this item in the questionnaire, and she was the same person who had responded to Item 9, Section 2, where she had mentioned that a simpler reader would be the change she would like to see. The reason for this answer, she said, was that this change would encourage the child to read better.

Basic Cathedral Reader

Of the 16 teachers who claimed that they were using this reader, 10 responded to this part of Item 9. Their answers to this part of the question referred to the changes which they had suggested on the previous question. In referring to the introduction of a more Belizean reader, the following reasons were given as to why they thought the changes would be useful. Here they are stated in the teachers own words:

1. The book will be more relvant to the child's environment.
2. With such a book students will be able to relate to

the incidents and to their experience.

3. Children will identify with the characters in the book.
4. Such a book will bring local stories.

In refeerring to the introduction of the Nelson's West Indian Reader, the teachers who had recommended this book felt that selection of this book was justified because

1. this book has Coloured people and scenes which are more relevant to our children; and
2. this book is more interesting and compares more to our environment.

While referring to the methodology of teaching reading to children whose first languiage is not English, they stated that in repeating new words more often, children learn to read better and will enjoy reading.

Nelson's West Indian Reader

In meeting these teachers' demands for an introduction of Belizean culture into the reading textbooks, these 30 teachers specificed that such changes would be useful because

1. the child will then understand what he is learning;
2. the child will be motivated to read;
3. the words and pictures will be familiar to the child;
4. children will understand that their spoken word can be read;

5. reading will become meaningful;
6. the reading will suit the child's vocabulary;
7. the child will be acquainted with the topic, pictures, and can compare to this environment.

These teachers believed that the changes suggested in Item 9, Section 2, would benefit the child in his academic learning also, since

1. English would be taught as a second language;
2. the child could learn better by repetition;
3. a good foundation for reading would be provided;
4. a better phonetics background would be provided;
5. words would be introduced at a slower pace;
6. the child can learn better with the sound approach;
7. pre-reading activities will be met with such a book, and would give a better background [illegible] reading.

This revelas that teachers who have had experience using the Nelson's West Indian Reader feel that this reader does not really meet the needs of the little child who comes to school with little or no knowledge of English; and that this reader does not seem to meet the needs for methods of teaching English as a second language.

Obstacles

Item 10 asked the teachers if they foresaw any obstacles arising from the church, teachers, parents, or the Ministry of Education, against the idea of introducing new textbooks in the schools for Infant I. Out of 100 teachers interviewed, 44 answered this question. In reviewing the answers, it appears as if some teachers did not quite understand the intent of the question, or had not bothered to read it properly, as a few answers did not deal with the question posed. Nonetheless, 17 of the 44 teachers who responded, or 37% of the 44, saw the church as an obstacle to change; 32 of the 44 (73% of those responding) saw the parents objecting to change; 12 (27% of respondents) thought teachers themselves would not want change; and 18 (40% of those answering this question) thought the Ministry of Education would not want change. These responses are elaborated below.

The Churches

As noted above, 17 teachers felt that the church would object to change or would present obstacles to the idea of introducing new textbooks for Infant I. One of the themes that was elaborated was that some of the textbooks used in schools reinforce the beliefs of the particular religious affiliation of the school. The Basic Cathedral Reader was particularly mentioned in this respect. The teachers also pointed out that some churches preferred to stick to their own doctrine, and were ready to condemn any book which did not portray Christian values explicitly, or any book which did not include enough relgious matter. A few teachers mentioned that there is and would be a conflict when the Nelson's West Indian Reader is introduced in the schools, as this book does not depict particular secenes and episodes which show a belief in the Christian church. Some mentioned that the Catholic church does not want to loose its popularity among Belizean people and therefore Basic Cathedral Readers were still used.

The Parents

Of the 44 teachers who responded to this question, 32 of them felt that parents would find obstacles against the idea of introducing new readers. Of this number, 21 teachers pointed out the problem of high cost of textbooks. This concern was brought out in statements such as "the cost of the books is too high," "Belizean parents have many children to have to buy books for," "every time a change comes it's more money for parents," "parents will complain about inflation," "books are passed down in a family; the West Indian Readers tear too easily." The other few things that teachers thought parents would object to were, for example, "books too advanced," "a waste of money," and the statement "let us see the book *first*."

The Teachers

Of the 44 teachers who responded, only 12 believed that teachers themselves would find obstacles against the introduction of new readers. This might be the result of the fact that teachers seem never to be consulted in the introduction of new curriculum materials. One teacher mentioned this in the following way, "teachers are used to accepting." Others pointed out that teachers wanted to help pupils learn to read, and if a new book was ordered for them by the Ministry of Education, or the managers of the schools, they were willing to give it a try. One objection brought out was the need for a manual or guidebook to go along with any new reader. This concerned some teachers, and it seems to be an important point. It may be directed against such books as the Nelson's West Indian Reader, which does not have an adequate guidebook. Some teachers expressed the desire to have a change in the reader they are now using, but believed that a study and examination of any proposed new reader should be done by the teachers themselves.

Ministry of Education

Eighteen teachers of the 44 respondents to this item felt that the Ministry of Education would present obstacles to the idea of introducing new textbooks for Infant I. At present the Ministry of Education in Belize wants to implement the Nelson's West Indian Reader in all schools, so it is the Ministry which orders these books from the publishers. Some of the teachers said that the Ministry has already decided which book they want schools to use, having their stock ordered, and therefore would not want to change to another reader. Other teachers felt that the Ministry never sees a need for change, since they are not the ones using the readers. Over the years, before the Nelson's West Indian

Readers came to Belize, the Ministry of Education simply was not involved in the ordering of books, leaving this entirely in the hands of managers of the different religious denominations. Some of the teachers may have been referring to this practice when they said that the Ministry of Education was never really concerned about changing to new readers, or did not bother to order reading textbooks.

Teacher Suggestions

Item 11, the last item on the questionnaire, invited the teachers to give comments or general suggestions to people engaged in selecting and preparing reading material for Infant I. Seventy-nine teachers responded to this challenge. One hundred fifteen comments and suggestions were given, and these were divided by the researcher into four categories. (The number in parentheses is the number of times, out of 115 responses, that a suggestion in the area noted occured.)

1. Relevance to culture (53)
2. The pedagogical content (38)
3. The book itself (17)
4. General suggestions (7)

Under the first category, the high number of suggestions shows real concern on the part of the teachers. They exhorted people engaged in the planning and preparation of readers to take into consideration the environment, the experience of the child, his language, and the relation of the readers to one's country. Statements which kept repeating themselves throughout the summary of responses were "books should be relevant to child's experience;" "take into consideration the child's environment;" "should be related to one's country;" "should appeal to all ethnic groups;" "use local pictures."

Category 2 was concerned with the content of readers with respect to second-language instruction in English. Of the 115 comments, 38 were in this area. In the two highest-mentioned comments, teachers were concerned that the books should meet the level of the child's understanding, and his language, and the importance of a phonetic background at the initial stage of the child's schooling. A few comments given under this section were "use phonic approach;" "meet level of child's vocabulary;" "give us an easier book;" "use pictures more often;" and "not too many words to learn in one year."

Category 3 was directed to the book itself. These suggestions did not relate to the culture of the child or to the methodology of teaching, or to content; but the teachers who responded here were thinking of the book itself, from the young child's perspective. Comments under this category included such statements as "should be a hard-covered book;" "large words and bold printed letters;" "end a story--West Indian Reader doesn't;" and "give big pictures."

In the last category practical comments and suggestions were given. A few of the statements were "hold meetings with teachers;" "an environmental survey could be carried out;" "different ethinic groups to meet;" and "planners should visit schools." These suggestions teachers proposed should be carried out before selecting and preparation of materials would be done.

From the above we can gather that most teachers cooperated in responding to this section of the questionnaire which portrays their concern and interst for the preparation and selection of materials. After all, they are the ones who have to use these readers in the schools, and they are the ones who must help the child to learn to read from them. Teachers who have participated in the designing and selection of materials will be encourage to share part of the responsibility for the success in the use of these curriculum materials.

IX. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter the research attempts to give a retrospective view of the study in order to

1. re-examine the aims of the study in light of the findings;
2. give possible implications of such findings for education and for future research; and
3. make recommendations and offer suggestions for practical and policy change.

The main purpose of this study was to document the impact of colonialsim on the eductional systems of colonial schools of Belize, as reflected in the choice of textbooks for the initial stages of teaching reading. Of major concern was the language policy adopted and adhered to by these schools. The study attempted to deal with one aspect of colonialism; it attempted to elucidate how colonial educational policy was translated into education practice in Belize, through the use of foreign reading textbooks. Five of the main reading textbooks used to teach reading to beginners in Belize were used as an example of this practice. These readers were thoroughly reviewed by the researcher in a generalized content analysis, using a method and justification articulated by Decore, Carney and Urion (1981). To further strengthen this contention a survey of the opinions and views of 100 Belizean teachers, representing a sample of convenience, was made. This survey addressed the views of those teachers towards the patterns of use initial reading textbooks in Belize. Though one cannot claim that the sample is represenative, in that it is not a random sample of a well defined population, all teachers in Belize, one can reasonably claim that it represents the views of teachers in Belize who are affected by the choice of the readers, because the survey included 100% of the teachers who are in training at Belize's only teacher education institution, who are taking training for Infant level teaching.

The review of the related literature supports the premise that the reading textbooks used to teach reading in Infant I, to Belizean youngsters, were chosen as a result of this colonial heritage. The first part of the thesis examined the literature dealing with colonialism and education, and then a documentation of the demographic, social, political and educational history of Belize was provided to demonstrate the coherence of the arguments about the nature of colonial education and the Belizean experience.

The researcher pointed out thereby that historically the school system in Belize was instituted by the British colonial government, and that the curriculum materials, including the textbooks used for reading, are similar, still, after independence, to those of the metropolitan powers. The metropolitan powers in this case are Britain (through the political domain of colonialsm) and the U.S.A. (as an economic and social metropolitan power for Central America, generally).

The review of research done by others interested in this field also documents that the language policies of the British colonial schools stipulates generally that all children entering schools be taught reading at the Infant I level in English. This policy is still being adopted, even by former colonies of Britain. A review of the studies and research done on Belize in this regard points to the ill effects of this policy on the academic achievement of children, and on their personal advancement, and to the effect of the rejection of the child's actual cultural heritage. The policy, inherited from colonialism, is so pervasive that it allows an educational administration to ignore something as basic as the language which the child in school in fact speaks.

The findings of the content analysis of the readers has supported the premise that these reading textbooks do not portray the multilingual nature of the society, especially in the method the readers advance to teach reading to children. The accompanying guidebooks, and the discussions of scope and sequence of the books, reflect only an assumption of children whose first language is English. It was further pointed out through a detailed analysis of the content of each of these readers that the methods employed for reading fail to take into consideration the language patterns and sound systems of the child's primary language. It was also shown that these readers fall short in meeting the proposed aims stated in *The Belizean Curriculum Guide*

1980, that English be taught to children as a second rather than as a first language. This section concluded by supporting the stated assumption that the 5 textbooks analyzed failed to portray the multilingual nature of the schools in their methods put forward to teach reading to youngsters.

The content-analysis of the readers was also undertaken to discover whether these readers portrayed the cultural nature of the Belizean child and his environment. A thorough examination of each of these 5 reading textbooks has clearly shown that the images, family structures, and values presented for the most part depict a middle-class, nuclear, White, western family, and its way of living; and that this does not reflect the Belizean culture.

The teacher questionnaire was designed to discover the attitude of teachers towards the reading textbooks they have been using to teach reading to beginners. It was assumed at the outset that many teachers would state that they had encountered problems with the readers, and that these problems would arise because of the failuire of the books to portray the culture of the child, and because of the lack of methods appropriate to meet the multilingual nature of the child's background. The findings which have been analyzed and discussed in Chaper 8 revealed that most teachers, of those who responded to this item stated that they had encountered problems because of the textbooks' failure to account for the lingustic and cultural background of the children in school in Belize. By far a majority of the teachers who responded to this question (and in fact, a majority of teachers queried) said that they had encountered problems in this regard. It was assumed, then, that most teachers would want a change to another textbook. Seventy (of 100) teachers responded to this issue, and of them, 43, or 62% of those responding, wanted a change to another textbook.

The above findings ought to have some implications for educators of teachers and for educational planners of Belize, especially those involved in selecting and preparing curriculum materials at the Curriculum Development Unit. Lambert (1968) in a study of "Roles of Attitude and Motivation," expressed that attitudes have great influence on the progress and success of new programs used in schools.

It was further anticipated that some association might exist between the variables of teacher recognition of culturally irrelevant texts; texts which assume English as a native language for Belizean children; and the sex, qualification, teaching experience, age, and ethnicity of the teachers. The analysis of the data revealed no statistically signficant association (as might be revealed by chi-square computation) between the variables of sex, age, teaching experience, ethnicity of teacher, and the variables of positive identification of either of those problem areas, culture or language. However there was an association between the variables of such recognition on the part of teachers, and the variable of level of teacher qualification. This supports the stated assumption that the higher the qualification of the teacher, the higher the ability to perceive the problems encountered in the use of these reading textbooks. This theory has also been supported by researchers who have undertaken the study of teachers in the educational field (Ben-Peretz 1980, Rist 1970).

The study also presumed that an association would exist between the type of reader used and the teachers recognition of problems in textbooks which had to do with either culture of language. The chi-square measure did in fact reveal such an association, and it seems that the Basic Cathedral Reader was the reader most seriously implicated. The findings of the content-analysis of this reader also supported the view that it depicts a western, nuclear, white middle-class way of living. Both the researcher, in the content analysis, and the teachers queried, noted the problems of cultural and linguistic nature arising from using this reader. This finding should have grave implications for presonnel at the Ministry of Education in Belize, and to the managers of schools selecting materials for use in reading programs at the Infant level. To managers of Catholic schools in Belize, this finding should mean something, since they are the ones who continue to order these Basic Cathedral Readers for Infant I classes, in spite of the fact that the editions ordered have been outdated in the U.S.A., their country of origin.

A high correlation of the variables dealing with the type of reader used in school and the noting of a linguistic problems in choice of text should be noted in the findings. It is particularly important to note a reader which was implicated very seriously in this regard was Nelson's West Indian Reader. The researcher, in the content analysis, found the same sort of problems and was strong in her comments on the unsuitability of this particular reader. According to the comments given by teachers, this reader lacks basic steps, repetition patterns for basic skills necessary for beginners of reading, and particularly beginners whose native language is not English. This particular finding ought to have serious implications for the Ministry of Education, which seems to have embarked in recent years on the project of trying to implement this reader in all Infant schools in Belize. Dissatisfaction with this reader by teachers who are using them has begun to be recognized at an unofficial level. It appeared that the questionnaire was the first opportunity the teachers had had to state in writing their contention against this particular textbook.

In summarizing the analysis of the teachers' questionnaire, it must be pointed out that Belizean teachers were most helpful and cooperative in giving comments and suggestions for the future selection of reading material. Many referred to the importance of the relevance of the reading textbooks in meeting the culture of the child. They urged educational planners and curriculum developers to take into consideration the environment of the child and his or her experience, and the child's language background, in selecting readers. All those teachers who responded to this last item of the questionnaire expressed their desire for an appropriate reader for their children in the near future.

A. Implications of Findings, Limitations, Future Research

Can the content of the reading textbooks be changed now that Belize has acquired its independence from Britain? Such a venture will need the cooperation of the churches, and financial spendings. Who will sponsor such an undertaking, while Belize remains poor and underdeveloped in the shakles of a colonial heritage?

As a result of the content-analysis of the five reading textbooks used to teach reading to Infants in Belize and the findings derived from the teachers' questionnaires, it appears that not one of these prescribed reading textbooks seems suited to teach reading to Infant I Belizean children. However, further study and extensive research needs to be conducted in order to design a reader suitable to the the unique cultural and linguistic nature of the country. This possibility however seems unlikely in the near future, since the government of Belize would not have the available funds to design such books.

The limitations of financial resources would be one of the chief obstacles in the way opting for more appropriate curriculum materials for schools.

Altach and Kelly (1978) affirm that poor third world countries have many competing social demands and poor resources. And that the development of new textbooks for all levels of the educational system to take the place of old colonial books is an expensive and time-consuming proposition. There are few curriculum experts who can provide guidance, especially in third world countries.. The market is in many places assured and if the nation is small, the market may be too small to provide profitable distribution. Printing and publishing facilities may not be available. The cost of developing textbooks is high in any country, in third world countries costs is highest because of small markets, etc. In response to these obstacles many third world countries continue to use colonial textbooks or use foreign publishers to produce their textbooks. Industrialized nations take advantage of this and strenghten their influence where they find a ready market for their surplus, and at times outdated series of readers. This is the case in Belize, where many of the prescribed series of readers have long been out of use in the U.S.A. and England.

Yet the continued use of textbooks void of the child's real life and culture, may have the implication of a lasting negative mark of the child's personality, and development of self-identity. These books are presented to the child at a vulnerable age, when most of them have not yet attained a critical perspective on themselves and their backgrounds.

The presentation of white-middle class people, and their way of life as the approved way to live, as the only way of life that brings happiness may have serious implications on the child. For example, a condemnation of themselves, and their families for being different than what is presented in the readers, this may also result later on the rejection of that same society, which in their childhood was presented as the ideal. The society into which Belizean children are expected to fit is very different from that presented by these readers. Another problem which may arise is the alienation of the child from his own culture. The significance of alienation is divorcing reading from the child's experience and forcing him to engage in a world that is foreign, strange, and outside of his every day experience. Instead of placing the child through such traumatic experiences the child should be allowed to develop enveloped in his own tradition providing him with a sense of belonging to his real culture.

Critics in North America are calling for publishers and authors to liberate the children in the readers, so that the children who read them can begin not only to believe in the words that they read, but that they might also begin to believe in themselves. They recommend that authors and publishers take the children seriously instead of portraying stereotypes of middle class families, luxurious homes, the characters always dressed up, smiling children etc. In the books surveyed, children who have responsibilities of their own were seldom portrayed, nor were children given responsibility to carry. In Belize there are many children who at an early age are given grave responsibilities to carry. Responsibilities towards the smaller ones, and towards the home. There are many children who are poor because their parents are not able to provide for comfort and luxuries as those presented in the readers. These children live in a world beyond the classroom, and that world is not that luxurious, nor so cheerful as these readers depict.

B. Suggestions for future Research

If the implementation of new reading textbooks portraying a more nationalistic background were made feasable for Belize, then more research on the best methods to proceed in designing such readers would be needed. It is hoped that the results of this survey will suggest a further need for research in this area. The findings which have been presented could indicate a need for additional research, this might be conducted in the following areas:

1. Duplication of the same study but with more samples of teachers more samples of schools, and possibly an urban/rural setting;
2. A duplication of this type of research, using another grade e.g. instead of using the Infant level using readers say of middle division or possibly the senior division of the Primary school;

3. Conducting similar research but with another subject of the curriculum, say Science or History, in the same Belizean setting.

At this point it seems pertiment to draw attention to the fact that the findings in this study were based on a rather small sample of Belizean teachers, and therefore the percentages and chi-square findings have been based on some occasions on a small number of frequencies, therefore some speculation must be maintained on the degree of confidence which might be placed on the findings. Another important point which must be brought out is that statistical inferences beyond this group of teachers would not be justifiable.

C. Recommendations and Some Considerations

Recommendations in this study are concerned with suggestions for teachers engaged in teaching young children to read, for those in training and for Curriculum Officers, employed in designing and selecting reading materials for schools in Belize.

For Teachers

The following are suggestions put forward for Belizean teachers, especially those in training. Some of these suggestions were guided by the responses given by the teachers in the open-ended questionnaires.

1. That teachers be sensitized to the cultural and pedagogical problems arising from using the prescribed

reading materials is schools.

2. That teachers in training be exposed to the methods used to teach reading to children, from the perspective of teaching a second language, rather than teaching reading to beginners as if English were their first language.
3. That teachers be instructed and guided to construct and use instructional materials for teaching reading, which reflect the cultural and linguistic heritage of our children, as teacher made-materials are sometimes more appropriate to the needs and interest of the children.
4. That teachers in training be exposed to the theories and practices of the different approaches to reading.
5. That teachers be trained to use the guidebook accompanying these readers sensibly and avoid, for example the use of suggested activities and work exercises which are not related to the culture or linguistic background of the pupils.
6. Teachers in training should be exposed to literature dealing with studies done on analysis of children's reading materials.

For Curriculum Developers

Curriculum developers play a crucial role in the direction taken for selecting and designing future reading materials for teaching reading to children in Belize. A few suggestions are here directed to the Ministry of Education, to Curriculum Officers, and to the Managers of Schools. Some of these suggestions have been derived from the suggestions given by the Belizean teachers, who paritcipated in the study.

1. That all reading textbooks currently in use in Belizean schools be critically reviewed by an authorized person from the Ministry of Education.
2. Awareness that the direct involvement of teachers representing all ethnic groups, on an equal basis, in helping to design and select future reading materials is of great importance for successful implementation of new curriculum materials.
3. To hold frequent dialogues and in-service workshops with teachers involved in teaching reading to Infants.
4. That it is incumbent that curriculum developers be aware of cultural differences, and similarities within the society.
5. That curriculum officers work very closely in collaboration with classroom teachers in the design, trial,and evaluation of new curriculum materials.
6. If future reading textbooks are to have a positive impact on children using them, it is imperative that the images and content in these readers mirror the child's culture and linguistic background.

D. Some Considerations and Concluding Remarks

The following considerations should be seriously reflected upon before any action for future selection or preparation of reading materials, be formulated, for

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Belizean Infants:

1. That the Belizean society constitutes four main ethnic groups, each with its own language, and way of life.
2. That some of these languages are not official written languages.
3. That some of the Belizean people may have a negative bias toward a few of these languages, and that this attitude may carry certain implications on the development of local reading textbooks which depict the cultures, and language patterns of the people and their way if life, for example the stigma attached to the Creole language.

Before concluding the researcher would like to point out that proposals and recommendations and real life situations in programs, are two separate phenomenon both logically and in practice. New proposals, for example those offered in the study, or those formulated by educational authorities may seem commendable and even feasable on paper, yet its success may depend on a number of factors. At times when these new ventures are put into practise, there seem to arise so many factors hindering its success. These issues may not have been able to be detected ir considered aforehand. The process of trying out new ventures especially in third world countries is always difficult and challenging.

Another factor which seems petinent to disclose deals with the attitude of the particular society to change. Many parents and educators seem wary of new approaches to education. They question the value of anything innovative or any departure from "well-trodden" traditional paths. Such attitudes have and do constitute a formidable opposition to change in education. Some insist that for anything new to be accepted, it must bear a strong resemblance to the old.

Should the above consideration discourage or influence us from venturing and fighting against an old traditional educational policy which this study and other researchers have found wanting? An educational policy which may not be condusive to the personal development of our little children. Ought we to allow tradition and long-standing customs to stand in the way of allowing our children to grow more naturally and meaningfully? The deep-seated concern which lies at the heart of this study, was the enhancement of the welfare, the respect, and the dignity that our little Belizean child deserves. This, was implicitly assumed could be offered them, if schools accepted the children the way they are; accepted their languages their culture, and allowed them to develop from there. The child's liberty, dignity and rights are destroyed when he is banned the means of expressing himself in the way he knows best; his language. The above would not take place if we respected the rights of children, if we treated them with respect and reverence. Under the present educational system of many colonial schools, many children become the victims of suppression. The laws, the educational policies, methods, and the curriculum materials used for teaching, become the means of persecuting children to a certain extent. Forcing a child to speak and honour a foreign tongue only, to express himself or herself only in this foreign language, can be a means of trespassing on the child's freedom as a human person.

TABLES

ETHNIC GROUP	%
Creoles (mixed European & African)	50%
Mestizos (mixed Spanish & Indian)	22%
Maya & Ketchi Indians	13%
Garifuna (Black Caribs)	7%
Indians	3%
Others (Lebanese, Chinese, etc.)	3%
European	2%

Table 2-1.--Population Breakdown By Ethnic Origins (Based On 1970 National Census).

Category Label	Absolute Freq.	Relative Freq. (Pct.)	Adjusted Freq. (Pct.)	Cum Freq. (Pct.)
Less than 25	51	51.0	51.5	51.5
25-30	27	27.0	27.3	78.8
30-35	11	11.0	11.1	89.9
Over 35	10	10.0	10.1	100.0
	1	1.0	Missing	100.0
Totals	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 8-1.--Age of Respondents to Teachers Questionnaire

Category Label	Absolute Freq.	Relative Freq. (Pct.)	Adjusted Freq. (Pct.)	Cum Freq. (Pct.)
1-5 Years	51	51.0	52.0	52.0
5-10 Years	26	26.0	26.5	78.6
10-20 Years	15	15.0	15.3	93.9
Over 20 Years	6	6.0	6.1	100.0
	2	2.0	Missing	
Totals	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 8-2.--Teaching Experience of Respondents In Years

Category Label	Absolute Freq.	Relative Freq. (Pct.)	Adjusted Freq. (Pct.)	Cum Freq. (Pct.)
In Training	66	66.0	67.3	67.3
Trained	16	16.0	16.3	83.7
Not Trained	16	16.0	100.0	100.0
	2	2.0	Missing	100.0
Totals	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 8-3.--Level of Teacher Qualification of Respondents in Years

Category Label	Absolute Freq.	Relative Freq. (Pct.)	Adjusted Freq. (Pct.)	Cum Freq. (Pct.)
Creole	47	47.0	47.0	47.0
Garifuna	26	26.0	26.0	73.0
Mestizo	21	21.0	21.0	94.0
Indian	4	4.0	4.0	98.0
Other	2	2.0	2.0	100.0
Totals	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 8-4.--Ethnic Group Affiliation of Respondents

Category Label	Absolute Freq.	Relative Freq. (Pct.)	Adjusted Freq. (Pct.)	Cum Freq. (Pct.)
West Indian	71	71.0	71.7	71.7
Cathedral	16	16.0	16.2	87.9
Ladybird	5	5.0	5.1	92.9
McKee	6	6.0	6.1	99.0
Other	1	1.0	1.0	100.0
Totals	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 8-5.--Infant Reader Used in Respondent's School

Roman Catholic	65 Teachers
Anglican	9 Teachers
Methodist	13 Teachers
Weslyan	5 Teachers
Nazarene	2 Teachers
Government	4 Teachers
Not Specified	2 Teachers
Total	100 Teachers

Table 8-6.--Type of School

Category Label	Absolute Freq.	Relative Freq. (Pct.)	Adjusted Freq. (Pct.)	Cum Freq. (Pct.)
Problems Noted	50	50.0	53.8	53.8
None Noted	27	27.0	29.0	82.8
Don't Know	16	16.0	17.2	100.0
	7	7.0	Missing	100.0
Totals	100	100.0	100.0	

Table 8-7.--Teachers Noting Problems With Infant-Level Reader

READER	CULTURAL Noted	PROBLEMS Not Noted	ROW TOTAL
West Indian Reader	28	12	40 70.2%
Basic Cathedral	3	7	10 17.5
Other	6	1	7 12.3
COLUMN TOTAL	37 64.9	20 35.1	57 100.0

3 out of 6 (50.0%) of the Valid Cells Have Expected Cell
Frequency Less Than 5.0.
Minimum Expected Cell Frequency = 2.456
Chi Square = 7.13600 With Two Degrees of Freedom
Significance 0.0282
Number of Missing Observations = 43

Table 8-8.--Contingency Table: Infant Reader Used in School and Teacher's Notation of Problems of Cultural Relevance With Reader.

QUALIFICATIONS	CULTURAL Not Noted	PROBLEMS Noted	ROW TOTAL
In Training	11	24	35 61.4
Completed	8	5	13 22.8
Not Trained	1	8	9 15.8
COLUMN TOTALS	20 35.1	37 64.9	57 100.0

2 out of 6 (33.3%) of the Valid Cells Have Expected Cell Frequencies Less Than 5.0.
Minimum Expected Cell Frequency = 3.158
Chi Square = 6.47072 With 2 Degrees of Freedom
Significance = 0.0393
Number of Missing Observations = 43

Table 8-9.--Contingency Table: Teaching Qualification and Teacher's Notation of Problems With Cultural Relevance of Reader.

CULTURAL PROBLEMS	TEACHING EXPERIENCE Under 5 Yrs	Over 5 Yrs	ROW TOTALS
Not Noted	18	18	36 65.5
Noted	6	13	19 34.5
COLUMN TOTALS	24 43.6	31 56.4	55 100.0

Corrected Chi Square = 1.04859 With 1 Degree of Freedom
Significance = 0.3058

Raw Chi Square = 1.71583 With 1 Degree of Freedom
Significance = 0.1902

Table 8-10.--Contingency Table: Teaching Experience and Teacher's Notation of Problems of Cultural Relevance of Reader.

	LANGUAGE	PROBLEM	ROW TOTALS
READER	Not Noted	Noted	
West Indian Reader	5	35	40 70.2
Basic Cathedral	8	2	10 17.5
Other	0	7	7 12.3
COLUMN TOTALS	13 22.8	44 77.2	57 100.0

2 out of 6 (33.3%) of the Valid Cells Have Expected Cell Frequency Less Than 5.0.
Minimum Expected Cell Frequency = 1.596
Chi Square = 23.06155 with 2 degrees of freedom
Significance = 0.0000
Number of Missing Observations = 43

Table 8-11.--Contingency Table.--Infant Reader Used in School and Teacher's Notation of Language-Related Problems With Reader.

QUALIFI-CATION	LANGUAGE Not Noted	PROBLEMS Noted	ROW TOTALS
In Training	6	29	35 61.4
Completed	7	6	13 22.8
Not Trained	0	9	9 15.8
COLUMN TOTALS	13 22.8	44 77.2	57 100.0

2 Out Of 6 (33.3%) of the Valid Cells Have Expected Cell Frequency Less Than 5.0.
Minimum Expected Cell Frequency = 2.053.
Chi Square = 10.41094 With 2 Degrees of Freedom
Significance = 0.0055
Number of Missing Observations = 43

Table 8-12.--Contingency Table: Teacher Qualification and Teacher's Notation of Second-Language Problems with Reader.

LANGUAGE PROBLEMS	EXPERIENCE Under 5 Yrs	Over 5 Yrs	ROW TOTALS
Not Noted	3	10	13 23.6
Noted	21	21	42 76.4
COLUMN TOTALS	24 43.6	31 56.4	55 100.0

```
Corrected Chi Square = 1.93345 With 1 Degree of Freedom
Significance = 0.1644

Raw Chi Square = 2.92571 With 1 Degree of Freedom
Significance = 0.0872
Number of Missing Observations = 45
```

Table 8-13.--Contingency Table.--Teaching Experience and Teacher Notation of Second-Language Problems With Reader.

CULTURAL PROBLEMS	SEX Male	Female	ROW TOTALS
Not Noted	7	30	37 64.9
Noted	3	17	20 35.1
COLUMN TOTALS	10 17.5	47 82.5	57 100.0

1 out of 4 (25.0%) of the Valid Cells Have Expected Cell Frequency Less Than 5.0.
Mimimum Expected Cell Frequency = 3.509
Corrected Chi Square = 0.00004 With 1 Degree of Freedom
Significance = 0.9949

Raw Chi Square = 0.13783 With 1 Degree of Freedom
Significance = 0.7104

Number of Missing Observations = 43

Table 8-14.--Contingency Table: Sex of Respondents and Teacher's Notation of Culture-Related Problems With Reader.

	AGE		ROW
	Under	Over	TOTALS
CULTURAL PROBLEMS	25 Yrs	25 Yrs	
Not Noted	17	20	37 66.1
Noted	5	14	19 33.9
COLUMN TOTALS	22 39.3	34 60.7	56 100.0

Corrected Chi Square = 1.28859 With 1 Degree of Freedom
Significance = 0.2563

Raw Chi Square = 2.02810 With 1 Degree of Freedom
Significance = 0.1544

Number of Missing Observations = 44

Table 8-15.--Contingency Table: Age of Respondents and Teacher's Notation of Culture-Related Problems With Reader.

ETHNICITY	CULTURAL Not Noted	PROBLEMS Noted	ROW TOTALS
Creole	16	11	27
			47.4
Garifuna	11	5	16
			28.1
Mestizo	9	2	11
			19.3
Indian	1	2	3
			5.3
COLUMN	37	20	57
TOTALS	64.9	35.1	100.0

```
3 Out of 8 (37.5%) of the Valid Cells Have Expected Cell
Frequency Less Than 5.0.
Mimimum Expected Cell Frequency = 1.053
Chi Square = 3.17615 With 3 Degrees of Freedom
Significance = 0.3653
Number of Missing Observations = 43
```

Table 8-16.--Contingency Table.--Ethnicity of Respondents and Teacher's Notation of Culture-Related Problems With Reader.

	SEX Male	Female	ROW TOTALS
LANGUAGE PROBLEM			
Not Noted	0	13	13 22.8
Noted	10	34	44 77.2
COLUMN TOTALS	10 17.5	47 82.5	57 100.0

1 Out of 4 (25.0%) Of the Valid Cells Have Expected Cell Frequency Less Than 5.0.
Mimimum Expected Cell Frequency = 2.281
Corrected Chi Square = 2.18430 With 1 Degree of Freedom
Significance = 0.1394
Raw Chi Square = 3.58317 With 1 Degree of Freedom
Significance = 0.0584
Number of Missing Observations = 43

Table 8-17.--Contingency Table.--Sex of Respondents and Teacher Notation of Second-Language Problems with Reader.

LANGUAGE PROBLEMS	AGE Under 25 Yrs	Over 25 Yrs	ROW TOTALS
Not Noted	2	11	13 23.2
Noted	20	23	43 76.8
COLUMN TOTALS	22 39.3	34 60.7	56 100.0

Correced Chi Square = 2.85483 With 1 Degree of Freedom
Significance = 0.0911
Raw Chi Square = 4.05483 With 1 Degree of Freedom
Significance = 0.0440
Number of Missing Observations = 44

Table 8-18.--Contingency Table: Age of Respondent and Teacher Notation of Second-Language Problems with Reader.

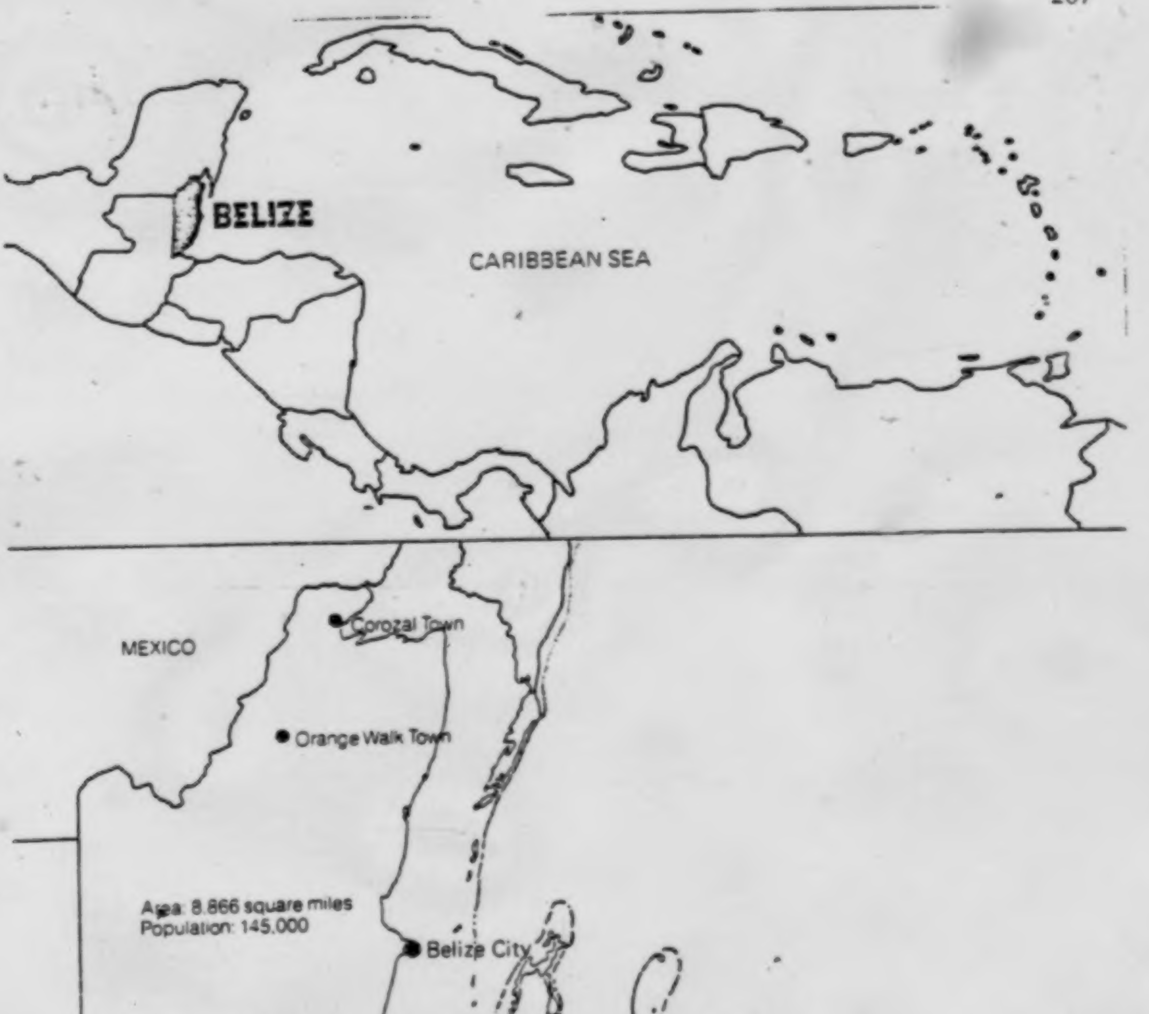
	LANGUAGE	PROBLEM	ROW
	Not		TOTALS
ETHNICITY	Noted	Noted	
Creole	10	17	27
			47.4
Garifuna	1	15	16
			28.1
Mestizo	2	9	11
			19.3
Indian	0	3	3
			5.3
COLUMN	13	44	57
TOTALS	22.8	77.2	100.0

4 Out of 8 (50%) of the Valid Cells Have Expected Cell
Frequency Less Than 5.0.
Minimum Expected Cell Frequency = 0.684
Chi Square = 6.61687 with 3 Degrees of Freedom
Signficance = 0.0852
Number of Missing Observations

Table 8-19.--Contingency Table: Ethnicity of Respondent and Teacher Notation of Second-Language Problem With Reader.

FIGURE

Map of Belize


BELIZE
CARIBBEAN SEA
MEXICO
Corozal Town
Orange Walk Town
Area: 8,866 square miles
Population: 145,000
Belize City
★ Belmopan
San Ignacio
Benque Viejo del Carmen
GUATEMALA
Dangriga
Punta Gorda
HONDURAS

Government of Belize/September 1981

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

The University of Alberta
Department of Educational Foundations
Edmonton, Canada

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

THIS QUESTIONNAIRE IS DESIGNED TO OBTAIN YOUR REACTIONS TO A NUMBER OF STATEMENTS RELATING TO THE PRESCRIBED TEXTBOOKS USED FOR INFANT I READERS IN BELIZE. YOUR RESPONSES TO THE STATEMENTS SHOULD PROVE HELPFUL FOR FUTURE GUIDANCE IN SELECTING OR PREPARING MATERIALS FOR READING IN INFANT I. THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

ALL INFORMATION WHICH YOU SUPPLY WILL BE TREATED AS CONFIDENTIAL. YOU DO NOT NEED TO WRITE YOUR NAME.

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Please check ( )

1. Sex: Male...... Female......
2. Age: Less 25.... 25-30...... 30-35...... Over 35......
3. Teaching Experience: 1 to 5 yrs...... 5 to [illegible] yrs...... 10 to 20 yrs... Over 20 yrs.....
4. To which ethnic group do you belong:
   Creole........ Garifuna........ Maya........ Ketchi........
   Mestizo....... Other...........
5. Qualifications: In training........ Trained........
   Not trained........ Other..........
6. Name the prescribed reader used in your school for Infant I.

   ....

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COPIE DE QUALITEE INFERIEURE

7. Do you use a teachers' manual or guidebook?

Yes.......... No........... Do not have one..........

8. Have you encountered any problems in using the prescribed textbook for Infant I reading?

Yes.......... No.......... Not sure...........

If yes, name two or three of these problems.

....

....

....

Give reasons why you think these problems occur.

....

....

....

9. Do you think a change to another textbook would be helpful?

Yes.......... No........... Not Sure..................

If yes, could you name two or three changes which you think would be helpful?

....

....

....

Why do you think these changes would be useful?

....

....

....

10. Do you foresee any obstacles arising from any of the following against the idea of introducing new textbooks for Infant I?

The Churches..

....

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Parents...

....

Teachers..

....

Ministry of Education...

....

11. Generally do you have any suggestions to offer to people engaged in selecting and preparing reading materials for Infant I?

....

....

....

Felicita C[illegible]rea de Finney

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